

People's Daily, 1 August 2004

DPRK urges US to fulfill promise on nuclear issue

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) urged on July 31 the United States to fulfill its promise and stick to the principle of "words for words" and "action for action" in order to solve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. "The US attitude towards the principle of 'words for words' and action for action' will serve as a touchstone of its true stance towards the nuclear issue," said a signed commentary in the country's state-run paper Rodong Sinmun. "The Bush administration is making much fuss pressing the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons program, raising a hue and cry over the 'danger' of its nuclear development," said the commentary. "Now that the DPRK has clarified its goal for denuclearization, the US should commit itself to abandoning its hostile policy towards the DPRK," the commentary continued. As the first phase of proof of its commitment, the US should "lift economic sanctions and blockades against the country, erase it from the list of 'sponsors of terrorism' and provide the DPRK with two million kilowatts of electricity in energy aid," it said. In order to find an appropriate solution to the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula, the six parties of the DPRK, the Republic of Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the US have met three times in Beijing.

The News, 1 August 2004

Iran says it has resumed building nuclear centrifuges

Tehran: Iran said on Saturday it had resumed building nuclear centrifuges, which Washington says are intended to enrich uranium to weapons-grade for use in bombs. Iran's decision backtracks from a pledge in October to the European Union "big three" members — Britain, France and Germany to suspend all uranium enrichment-related activities. "We have started building centrifuges," Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi told a news conference. However he insisted Iran had not resumed enriching uranium, the key part of the process which

can either produce fuel for power stations or bomb material. Iran had previously said it would restart making centrifuges to retaliate against a resolution from the UN nuclear watchdog last month deploring Tehran's failure to cooperate fully with inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The EU "big three" have given no details of their meeting in Paris on Thursday but US officials say Iran told them it would not surrender its right to proceed with uranium enrichment.

The News, 2 August 2004

EU "big three" report no progress in nuclear talks with Iran

Tehran: Talks the European Union "big three" held with Iran last week on its nuclear programme produced "no substantial progress" in efforts to restrict the Islamic republic's activities, EU diplomats said on Sunday. Officials from Britain, France and Germany met with an Iranian delegation in Paris on Thursday and Friday, and stressed their wish to see a halt to Iran's work on the sensitive nuclear fuel cycle. "Each side repeated their positions, and there were no changes," said a diplomat from one of the three European states. "We would like Iran to stop nuclear fuel cycle work, but Iran sees its suspension as just a temporary measure. Therefore, no substantial progress was made," the source told AFP. "This is disappointing, but having said that, nobody was honestly expecting a breakthrough," the diplomat added. "The meeting was more aimed at keeping up contacts."

The News, 2 August 2004

Chinese envoy in South Korea for nuclear talks

Seoul: China's special envoy on North Korea arrived in South Korea on Sunday to discuss preparations for new talks aimed at resolving a drawnout standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear drive, reports said. Ning Fukui will hold talks with South Korean officials and fly to Tokyo on Tuesday for similar meetings, the Yonhap news agency said. Japan, China, the two Koreas, Russia and the United States agreed

at the last round of six-way talks in Beijing in June to convene again by the end of September to seek to break the 21-month-old deadlock. China is preparing to convene a meeting of working level officials from the six nations next month ahead of the main session. Ning met with his US counterpart Joseph DeTrani in Beijing last week. DeTrani reaffirmed a key Washington demand that all Pyongyang's nuclear programs must be addressed if the talks were to succeed.

Daily Times, 2 August 2004

"No headway in EU-Iran nuclear talks"

Paris: Talks, which Britain, France and Germany held with Iran last week on its nuclear programme produced no substantial progress in efforts to restrict the Islamic republic's activities, European diplomats said on Sunday. Officials from the European Union big three met with an Iranian delegation in Paris on Thursday and Friday, and stressed their wish to see a halt to Iran's work on the sensitive nuclear fuel cycle. Each side repeated their positions, and there were no changes, said a diplomat from one of the three European states. We would like Iran to stop nuclear fuel cycle work, but Iran sees its suspension as just a temporary measure. Therefore, no substantial progress was made, the source told AFP. This is disappointing, but having said that, nobody was honestly expecting a breakthrough, the diplomat added. The meeting was more aimed at keeping up contacts. Iran announced on Saturday it had resumed making parts for centrifuges used for enriching uranium. Although Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi asserted that Iran was committed to a suspension of enrichment itself, he did say, No country has the right to deprive us of nuclear technology. Under an agreement reached last year with Britain, France and Germany, Iran had agreed to suspend sensitive uranium enrichment, allow tougher inspections and file a comprehensive declaration of its nuclear activities.

Daily Times, 2 August 2004

Iran will not yield to pressure on N-programme

Tehran: Iran said on Sunday it would continue to pursue acquiring nuclear energy and would not succumb to pressure or accept any conditions. Government spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi, speaking to reporters, said Iran continues to talk to Britain, France and Germany on the use of nuclear energy. Iranian officials have been holding talks in Paris with the European powers since Thursday to try and reach a consensus on Tehran's nuclear program. Washington strongly suspects Iran is using a civilian nuclear program as a cover for a secret nuclear weapons project. It has been lobbying for the International Atomic Energy Agency to refer Iran nuclear dossier to the UN Security Council, which could impose sanctions. The talks in Paris prepare the ground for a September meeting of the board of governors of the IAEA, which is expected to discuss Iran program. Asefi said that since the Europeans did not fulfill their promises to close Iran's nuclear dossier at the IAEA's June meeting, Iran felt no obligation to abide by the agreement which demanded Iran suspend manufacturing and assembling parts used in nuclear activities.

International Herald Tribune, 2 August 2004

Dealing with Iran

Policy toward Iran, which said over the weekend it had resumed building nuclear centrifuges, will be a crucial task for the next American president. The soundest approach will avoid the extremes of forceful regime change or abject appeasement. The president will need to find pragmatic yet principled ways of dealing with a clerical regime that is despised by most Iranians but is capable of causing enormous grief before it goes the way of other aggressive dictatorships. The Bush administration's stance toward Tehran has fluctuated, with periods of dialogue and cooperation interrupted by confrontation over Iran's nuclear program, its involvement in terrorism, and its flagrant meddling in postwar Iraq. This drift cannot go on. The stakes are too high not only for Washington

and Tehran but also for the Gulf region, Central Asia and the larger Middle East. The difficulty of dealing with the regime in Tehran is illustrated by the recent disclosure that eight of the Sept. 11 hijackers were allowed to enter Iran from Afghanistan without an Iranian entry stamp recorded in their passports, although the acting CIA director, John McLaughlin, said, "We have no evidence that there is some sort of official sanction by the government of Iran for this activity."

Khaleej Times, 2 August 2004

Task for Iran

Iran has now announced that it has started building centrifuges used for enriching uranium. The Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi has said that the move was in response to a failure by European countries to honour a pledge to close an international dispute over Iran's nuclear activities. However, Mr Kharrazi has said that Iran had not actually resumed enriching uranium. UN experts have been investigating suspicions that Iran is trying to build nuclear arms, but Teheran insists that its nuclear programme is purely peaceful. Once again, the media focus is now on Iran. Iran should not play with fire. They should not go the way of Iraq. It must really try to come up with its real plans on nuclear projects. Otherwise, Western countries will start creating conditions for another offensive. What will matter to them is the safety of their countries and the safety of their people. The impression that Iran creates in the West is of a country that supports terrorism. There are many in the West in whose minds this idea is already fixed. This announcement of Iran only strengthen that idea or impression. In such a situation, the public in the West might not hesitate to give the green signal for an attack. Iran has to be wise and smart. It has been building things beneficial for its people over the last 10-12 years. It must continue doing that, and not concentrate on things that will set it against the world. Especially, after the war in Iraq. If indeed Iran is attacked the way Iraq was, all their good efforts reforms .et al - will go down

the drain. Iran must come out of this negative media publicity, to close the chapter of misunderstanding with the West. It is not a nation in a position to retaliate against the superpower. Much better that it concentrate its energies on national development and the development of its people.

Asahi Shimbun, 2 August 2004

A Partnership in Review: Arms curb, Despite the need for review, the U.S. alliance is vital for a nuclear-free Japan, as China rises (Manabu Hara)

In the area of Japanese diplomacy and defense policy issues, Keizo Takemi stands as a leading figure within the younger generation of ruling Liberal Democratic Party members. With other young lawmakers, he has formed a bipartisan group to study and form a new defense policy for the country that is suited to the post-Cold War era. One of his concerns is that support for the Japan-U.S. alliance is weakening in Japan as the two countries lose sight of common strategic goals. He warns that any undermining of the credibility of the alliance could lead Japan down the path to nuclear armament.

People's Daily, 3 August 2004

Japanese probing chemical weapons

A team of Japanese experts Monday started an investigation into the Japanese-abandoned chemical weapons that injured two school boys in Northeast China -- but not without a tough welcome. The seven-member team, led by officials from Japan's special office for abandoned chemical weapon disposal, arrived at Lianhuapao Village in Dunhua, Jilin Province only to be greeted by a crowd of area residents, witnesses said. For a brief period, the angry Chinese blocked the cars of the Japanese officials, calling out for redress for the injured boys, and stating public anger over dissatisfaction with previous investigations into chemical incidents in the community. After about a 30-minute standoff, Chinese officials persuaded the crowd to disband, and the Japanese investigators began their

work, witnesses said. Results, so far, have not been revealed to the public. However, Chinese experts have confirmed the chemical weapons contained mustard gas discarded by Japanese troops in 1945. Once the weapons were identified as chemical bombs, Japanese officials were notified.

The News, 3 August 2004

"Iran not afraid of UN sanctions because of N-programme"

Tehran: Iran is not afraid of being referred to the UN Security Council over its suspect nuclear programme and could easily withstand economic sanctions, a top national security official said Monday. "The most America can do to get its way is to impose economic sanctions, but our experience of these over the past 25 years have proved that they are ineffective," said a top member of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Sayed Hossein Mussavian. "Even if the case is taken to the UN Security Council, nothing more than that (sanctions) can happen. It will fail. It does not worry us," he was quoted as saying by the official news agency IRNA. US Secretary of State Colin Powell said last Thursday that it was "more and more likely" that Iran would be referred to the UN Security Council as a possible prelude to sanctions. The United States has accused Iran of wantonly flouting international calls to curb its nuclear activities, saying Tehran is engaged in a "direct challenge" to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran denies it is seeking nuclear weapons, but insists on its legal right to master the fuel cycle for power generation. Being dependent on outside sources for nuclear fuel, Iran says, is not an option.

China Daily, 3 August 2004

Dispute over US assertion obstacle in standoff

China and the Republic of Korea (ROK) agreed Monday the major impediment to the 21-month standoff over the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula lies in a dispute over the US allegation that Pyongyang has a highly enriched uranium-based nuclear

weapons programme, the Yonhap news agency said. This news came after a meeting between China's ambassador on the nuclear issue Ning Fukui and his ROK counterpart Cho Tae-yong Monday to co-ordinate a timetable and agenda for the fourth round of six-party talks in September. "I believe it is now time to have specific discussions on how to call a working-level meeting and how to have a good fourth round of talks," Ning told Cho before their closed-door meeting, according to the news agency. The Chinese envoy is scheduled to meet Lee Jong-seok, deputy head of the secretariat of the ROK National Security Council, before leaving for Japan today.

China Daily, 4 August 2004

New N. Korean missiles could reach US land

North Korea is deploying new land- and sea-based ballistic missiles that can carry nuclear warheads and may have sufficient range to hit the United States, according to the authoritative Jane's Defense Weekly. In an article due to appear Wednesday, Jane's said the two new systems appeared to be based on a decommissioned Soviet submarine-launched ballistic missile, the R-27. It said North Korea had acquired the know-how during the 1990s from Russian missile specialists and by buying 12 former Soviet submarines which had been sold for scrap metal but retained key elements of their missile launch systems. Jane's, which did not specify its sources, said the sea-based missile was potentially the more lethal of the two new weapons systems. Ian Kemp, news editor of Jane's Defense Weekly, said North Korea would only spend the money and effort on developing such missiles if it intended to fit them with nuclear warheads.

People's Daily, 4 August 2004

Japan to host WMD interception drill

Japan will host a multinational marine exercise in October for intercepting weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and hopes China and South Korea will also join the US-led drill, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said Tuesday. Japan will offer to

host the 15-nation Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) drill in waters off Tokyo Bay in a PSI meeting slated for Thursday and Friday in the Norwegian capital of Oslo, Kawaguchi said. "It will be the first one to be held in Asia," she said at a press conference. "Japan has been playing an active role in the PSI. I think it will contribute to peace and stability of Asia." The drill will be based on a scenario that participating nations halt a ship suspected to be carrying WMD materials and seize them, according to the Foreign Ministry. Japan Coast Guard patrol ships and Maritime Self-Defense Force P-3C patrol aircraft will participate in the war games, the ministry said. Japan is the only Asian member when the initiative was launched with 10 other nations in May 2003 at the behest of US President George W. Bush. The membership has since expanded to 15, including Singapore and Russia.

People's Daily, 4 August 2004

Japan expresses regret over chemical weapon accident in northeast China

Japan expressed regret Tuesday over an accident last month in northeastern China in which two children were injured by gas that leaked from a mustard gas shell deserted by the Japanese military at the end of World War II. "We feel it is quite regrettable and extend our sincere sympathy to the victims," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hatsuhisa Takashima said in a statement as the government reached a conclusion that the shell was one left by the Japanese military. The ministry announced Tuesday that the government reached the conclusion through a survey by a fact-finding mission sent to the site. "In order to dispose of its chemical weapons left in China as early as possible, Japan will take appropriate measures in line with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention," he said.

Daily Times, 4 August 2004

Pakistan won't roll back its nuclear programme: Aziz

Islamabad: Federal Finance Minister and prime minister-designate Shaukat Aziz

categorically said on Tuesday that Pakistan's nuclear programme would not be rolled back since it guaranteed the integrity, sovereignty and security of Pakistan. Talking to delegations from Hassanabdal and Fatehjang at Punjab House in Islamabad, Mr Aziz said, We shall never roll back Pakistan's nuclear programme. Instead, it will be further augmented to improve the country's defence. We are ready to make more sacrifices for Pakistan. We want to make Pakistan's defence and the national economy stronger, and we'll make efforts to achieve this goal, he said. Mr Aziz said his government would try to provide speedy justice to people and improve their living standards. He said the Pakistani economy was put on the right track due to President Pervez Musharraf's prudent economic policies in the last five years. The finance minister said the national kitty was empty when he took charge of office. He said there was no money even to pay for oil and salaries of government employees. He assured the delegation members that their problems would be resolved on priority. He also promised that after his election as the country's prime minister, he would resolve people's problems without delay.

Daily Times, 4 August 2004

Kashmir linked to nuclearisation of India and Pakistan, says Indian study (Iftikhar Gilani)

New Delhi: The Kashmir problem is closely linked to the nuclearisation of India and Pakistan, said a study conducted by a retired Indian admiral for the Indian External Affairs Ministry. The study proposes a deviation from official Indian position suggesting that Kashmir is a nuclear flash point. Vice Admiral Verghese Koithara in his recently published book 'Crafting Peace in Kashmir Through a Realist Lens', has drawn parallels between conflicts in Northern Ireland and Kashmir, saying the conflict is simpler than it is commonly portrayed. The book has asked India and Pakistan to accept a final settlement along the Line of Control (LoC).

Daily Times, 4 August 2004

Egypt denies it said Saddam had WMDs

Cairo: Egypt has strongly denied that President Hosni Mubarak told a top US general before the US-led war against Iraq in March 2003 that Baghdad had weapons of mass destruction. General Tommy Franks, former commander of US Central Command, was reported as saying in an interview that Mubarak was among Arab leaders who had told him Saddam Hussein had such weapons. This allegation is absolutely devoid of any truth, the semi-official Al Ahram daily quoted Egyptian presidential spokesman, Maged Abdul Fatah, as saying. Franks reportedly made the comment to the US magazine, Parade, which appeared on Sunday and roughly coincided with the release of his new book, American Soldier. In the interview, Franks, 59, who commanded US forces during the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and retired in July 2003, said that the biggest surprise for him was that they found no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq, the reason we went to war. He added that multiple Middle Eastern leaders, including Jordan's King Abdullah and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, told him that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

Daily Times, 4 August 2004

Iran must cooperate on N-programme: US

Washington: The Bush administration warned Iran on Monday that it would face rising international pressure if it refused to back down on its nuclear programme, saying Tehran would be isolated if it continued on that path. President George W Bush said the United States and the European Union's big three members - France, Britain and Germany - expect there to be full disclosure, full transparency of their nuclear weapons programmes. White House national security adviser Condoleezza Rice further warned, This regime has to be isolated in its bad behaviour, not engaged. Rice said the administration was working with the Europeans and other International Atomic Energy Agency members on very tough set

of resolutions demanding Iranian cooperation. Iran is going to be confronted, Rice told Fox News, adding that the resolutions should be ready for consideration in September. If Iran refused to cooperate, she said, They are going to be isolated. Bush told reporters at the White House, We are working with our friends to keep the pressure on the mullahs to listen to the demands of the free world. The warnings came two days after Iran said it had resumed building nuclear centrifuges, which Washington says are intended to enrich uranium to weapons grade for use in bombs. Iran decision backtracks from a pledge in October to Britain, France and Germany to suspend all uranium enrichment-related activities. Rice brushed aside a question about whether France would go along with US plans to increase pressure.

The New York Times, 4 August 2004

Iran's Nuclear Challenge

The invasion of Iraq, which President Bush has often said would help stabilize the Middle East, is now hindering efforts to deal with a real nuclear threat: Iran. Despite its ritualistic denials, Iran gives every indication of building all the essential elements of a nuclear weapons program. And while the United States has hoped to pressure Iran into halting that program, the government in Tehran has clearly concluded that it has little to fear for now from an American government whose diplomatic credibility has been damaged and whose military capacities have been stretched by the war in Iraq. Given Washington's unsatisfactory options right now, the best choice is to support Britain, France and Germany as they search for a diplomatic settlement. The chances of success do not look good; the European initiative has had minimal results and seems to be losing ground. Iran announced on Saturday that it had resumed the construction of centrifuges that are capable of producing material for a nuclear bomb. Tehran says it is still honoring a pledge not to operate any of these centrifuges, but it proclaims its right to resume enrichment at any time.

The News, 5 August 2004

Chinese firm wins first contract for Chashma-2

Beijing: A Chinese firm on Wednesday signed the first contract to provide components for a second nuclear power station Beijing is building in Pakistan, state media reported. China First Heavy Industries Co Ltd won public bids to supply the pressure vessel for the new reactor, which will be built at Chashma, Xinhua news agency said. The pressure vessel, where the core of the reactor will be placed, is the key component guaranteeing the security and durability of the nuclear power plant, it said. The vessel will be built in the north-eastern city of Dalian and it is due to be completed in 38 months. It was the first equipment supply contract signed by China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), which is constructing the 300-megawatt plant, it said. CNNC and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in May signed an agreement to build the plant. The \$600 million C-2 (Chashma-2) project is likely to be completed in six years. A similar capacity plant built in Chashma with Chinese help became operational in 1999. CNNC Deputy General Manager Huang Guojun told Xinhua that China's transfer of nuclear technology and its nuclear cooperation with Pakistan were strictly in accordance with international treaties.

The News, 5 August 2004

Enriching uranium is Iran's legitimate right: Kharazi

Tehran: Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi asserted on Wednesday that Iran had a "legitimate right" to enrich uranium. "We will lobby for our rights in the international community to deal with the negative atmosphere our enemies have created against Iran and we will never allow the enemy to trample upon our legitimate rights enshrined in the international conventions," Kamal Kharazi was quoted as saying. Britain, France and Germany have been pressing Iran to cease working on the nuclear fuel cycle in exchange for increased

trade and cooperation and guaranteed supply of nuclear fuel from abroad. Such work is permitted under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), but the concern is that once fully mastered, a country possessing such technology can easily divert it into military usage, the European Union's big three argue. Iran has agreed to temporarily suspend enrichment pending the completion of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) probe, but continues working on other parts of the fuel cycle and has recently resumed making centrifuges used for enrichment.

The New York Times, 5 August 2004

Korean Missile Said to Advance; U.S. Is Unworried (Thom Shanker)

Washington, Aug. 4: North Korea appears closer to deploying a new mobile ballistic missile that is a worrisome increase in that nation's military capacity, but American government officials stressed Wednesday that the weapon could not reach the continental United States. The new missile is based on designs of a Soviet-era submarine-launched weapon, known in the West as the SSN6, which has an estimated maximum range of just over 2,600 miles. American officials first disclosed North Korea's efforts to develop the variant of the Soviet missile in September 2003. Fresh reports of North Korea's readiness to deploy the missile appeared in Wednesday's editions of Jane's Defense Weekly. North Korea does not have a submarine capable of carrying the missile to within striking range of the continental United States. Officials also expressed doubts that the North Korean government had developed the missile for the purpose of hiding it inside freighters to be sailed closer to this nation's shores for launch.

Associated Press, 5 August 2004

Nuclear Safety Lapses Won't Be Revealed

Washington: Citing a need to keep information from terrorists, regulators said Wednesday the government will no longer reveal security gaps discovered at nuclear power plants or the subsequent enforcement

actions taken against plant operators. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced the change in policy during its first public meeting on power plant safety since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. It drew barbs from critics who said the secrecy would erode public confidence in the agency. Until now, the NRC has provided regular public updates on vulnerabilities its inspectors found at the country's 103 nuclear power reactors, such as broken fences or weaknesses in training programs. "We need to blacken some of our processes so that our adversaries won't have that information," said Roy Zimmerman, director of the commission's Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, which was created after the attacks. NRC spokesman Scott Burnell said commissioners voted to take the step March 29, but kept it quiet as agency staff worked to implement the plan. The vote itself was revealed Wednesday and had nothing to do with this week's warnings that terrorists had surveyed U.S. financial institutions, Burnell said.

Daily Times, 6 August 2004

Musharraf for more steps to upgrade nuclear programme

Islamabad: President Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday that Pakistan's nuclear programme was a vital national asset and necessary steps would be taken to improve, upgrade and refine it. The president said this at a presentation by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), which was focussed on various aspects pertaining to the PAEC, said a press release. Paying tribute to scientists and engineers, the president said that it was because of their efforts that Pakistan had emerged a nuclear power and he assured the PAEC of the government continued support.

Daily Times, 6 August 2004

Buzdars block road leading to PAEC plant

Multan: Thousands of members of the Buzdar tribe blocked the road leading to the uranium enrichment plant of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) in

Taunsa on Thursday. The Buzdar clan cut off the plant's supply line and employees could not return to their homes. The PAEC is using our uranium and providing jobs to thousands of people from different areas while the locals are jobless and don't have access to basic necessities, the chief of the Buzdar Tribe, Sardar Fateh Muhammad said. We will not let the PAEC continue its work because it has not fulfilled its promise of providing jobs to local residents within a month's time. He said that if the government was not going to provide the local residents with jobs, then it should at least pay royalties to the relevant tribes on uranium and other precious metals and minerals. Residents protest against nazim: More than 300 residents of Mohallah Pir Pathan and Qadeerabad held a demonstration on Thursday to protest being forcefully ejected from their houses by Muhammad Amjad Khan, the nazim of union council No 40.

The New York Times, 6 August 2004

Washington's Gift to Bomb Makers

There is no bigger and more urgent threat to the security of every American than the possibility of nuclear bomb materials falling into the wrong hands. That is why it is astonishing, and frightening, that the Bush administration is now pushing to strip the teeth from a proposed new treaty aimed at expanding the current international bans on the production of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium. With talks on the new treaty set to begin later this year, the administration suddenly announced last week that it would insist that no provisions for inspections or verification be included. This reversal of past American positions - ignoring Ronald Reagan's famous cautionary advice, "Trust, but verify" - is all the more disturbing because it guts a treaty that could have significantly advanced President Bush's oft-stated goal of "keeping the world's most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous regimes." After raising the alarm on this terrifying problem, the White House now says Americans and the rest of the world are

better off trusting empty, unverified promises.

The New York Times, 6 August 2004

Whispers That May Wake the Dragons (Anne Wu)

Cambridge: The negotiations to remove nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula are a delicate business, made even more so with the tectonic shifts in Asian geopolitics. As facilitator in the often rocky negotiations that also include North and South Korea, Russia, Japan and the United States, China appears to be taking a decisive - if typically understated - diplomatic initiative in smoothing communications between North Korea and the United States. But what message is China whispering to North Korea? With the six party talks scheduled to resume in September, both those eager for China to exert its influence and those suspicious of that influence would dearly like to know. China now has an opportunity to take advantage of the cautious equilibrium between Washington and Pyongyang and advance the cause of nuclear nonproliferation on the Korean peninsula. There are still significant divisions between the United States, which is pressing for the verifiable and irreversible dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons program and North Korea, which has not yet even admitted it has an uranium enrichment program. The two sides also disagree on inspections and on the exact sequence of disarmament and assistance.

Asahi Shimbun, 7 August 2004

Hiroshima marks A-bomb anniversary

Hiroshima: Hiroshima's mayor on Friday admonished the United States for trying to develop smaller nuclear weapons as the city marked the 59th anniversary of its atomic bombing. Issuing his "Peace Declaration" at the packed memorial service here, Mayor Tadatashi Akiba vowed that the 12 months leading up to next year's anniversary would be "a year of remembrance and action" toward achieving a nuclear-free world. The service at the Peace Memorial Park drew about 45,000 people, including Prime

Minister Junichiro Koizumi. The Peace Bell tolled at 8:15 a.m., the moment the bomb was dropped on Aug. 6, 1945, by the United States on this now-bustling city of 1.14 million. The somber audience stood for one minute in silence in tribute to A-bomb victims, whose numbers continue to rise with each passing year. Akiba talked first about the remains of 85 wartime residents discovered earlier this year at Ninoshima island off Hiroshima Port. It was where more than 10,000 people with terrible injuries were taken soon after the bomb nicknamed "Little Boy" was dropped. "The remains remind us of the continuing agonies from that day, the inhumanity of atomic bombs and the ugliness of war," Akiba said. On the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament, Akiba had strong words for the United States.

Asahi Shimbun, 7 August 2004

U.S. should confide in allies on N. Korean nukes (Charles Pritchard)

Surprising in that the conventional wisdom going into the talks was that both the United States and North Korea would simply stall for time until after the U.S. presidential election in November. Both turned out to be far more politically astute than most were prepared to give them credit for. For Pyongyang, the outcome of the November election is far from certain and it understands that it cannot afford to hand a potential second term of Bush hardliners an easy rationale for walking away from diplomacy and embarking down a path toward confrontation. The smarter decision was to stay engaged in the six-party process, neither immediately accepting nor rejecting any U.S. proposal. Just when it looked like the U.S. approach to the third round of talks would involve the canonization of "CVID" (complete, verifiable, irreversible, dismantlement of nuclear arms programs), the political arm of the White House stepped in to warn that the North Korean nuclear problem threatened to become an election-year issue.

Asahi Shimbun, 7 August 2004

Ending the nuclear threat

The golden cross on the spire of the Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) in the center of the old German city of Dresden glitters again in the midsummer sunshine. On the night of Feb. 13, 1945, the entire city was reduced to rubble by a devastating air raid by British and American troops. Thirty-five thousand people lost their lives in a single night. For many years, only the pillars and walls of the church were left standing as testament to the destruction and slaughter on that day. After 10 years of restoration work, however, the church was repaired to the extent that the cross was attached to the spire again. Karl Hoch, a former clergyman who proposed the restoration of the church soon after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, says, "The repairs were carried out in the hope of pardoning the sins of all those who made war." The cross was a gift from the children of British pilots who took part in the air raid. The restored church became a symbol of reconciliation. The 59th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima has arrived. The cities of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Dresden are strongly linked. Even though different weapons were used, the three cities were attacked for the same purpose: to annihilate tens of thousands of people along with the cities.

The Japan Times, 7 August 2004

Tying antinuclear appeal to politics was a mistake

The mayor of Hiroshima should not have used the memorial ceremony for victims of the atomic bombing of the city--an occasion on which the nation calls on the international community to renounce the use of nuclear weapons--as a platform to assert his political beliefs. "The Japanese government, as our representative, should defend the peace Constitution, of which all Japanese should be proud, and work diligently to rectify the trend toward open acceptance of war and nuclear weapons increasingly prevalent at home and abroad," Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba said in his annual Hiroshima Peace Declaration at the

memorial ceremony to mark the 59th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of the city. It was unprecedented for a Hiroshima mayor to go so far as to refer to the question of constitutional revision in the peace declaration. Linking the protection of the pacifist Constitution with antiwar and antinuclear movements is typical of the mind-set of left-wing movements during the Cold War. It sends the wrong message to the world. The Liberal Democratic Party will present its draft for a revised Constitution next year, while Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) will do likewise in 2006, making constitutional revision the biggest political issue in the days ahead.

The Japan Times, 7 August 2004

Rationale for denuclearization

Fifty-nine years after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there is a disturbing sense that the world could be headed for more, not less, nuclear weapons. As the world's first and only atom-bombed nation, Japan is destined to do everything in its power to strive for the nonproliferation and eventual elimination of these weapons of mass destruction, or WMD. The fact is that the danger of nuclear proliferation has increased over the past decade. North Korea claims that it already has a few bombs, and multilateral diplomatic efforts for scrapping its nuclear program have made little substantial progress. Some analysts abroad warn that if Pyongyang's possession of nuclear arms capability is confirmed, Japan may well decide to go nuclear. The Cold War -- which had pushed the world to the brink of nuclear holocaust -- ended in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. But events since provide a chilling reminder that the post-Cold War world is not any safer. The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States appear to have further dimmed the prospects for total elimination of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weaponry is no longer the monopoly of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council: the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China. In 1998, India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests in defiance of international opinion. Although

they have taken confidence-building measures, such as extending a test moratorium and installing a hot line between New Delhi and Islamabad, the specter of a nuclear showdown continues to haunt South Asia.

The News, 8 August 2004

Bush administration fails to curtail Iran, N. Koreas' nuclear progress

New York: Intelligence officials and nuclear experts said that Iran and North Korea have both made significant progress, developing nuclear weapons programs in the past year, according to the report on Sunday. US officials wanted to step up covert actions to stall Iran's alleged nuclear arms efforts, in a tacit acknowledgment that the diplomatic initiatives with European and Asian allies had failed to curtail the programs. Meanwhile North Korea now probably has enough weapons-grade plutonium to test a weapon in the future, despite toughened sanctions and several rounds of six-nation talks aimed at curtailing such efforts, sources revealed. North Korea said to have completely reprocessed all of its weapons-grade plutonium, according to nonproliferation expert. Furthermore, both the Iranian and North Korean weapons programs were said to be increasingly self-sufficient through the aid they received from Pakistani scientists Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, a US official said in a statement.

The News, 8 August 2004

Iranian official insists on right to produce own nuclear fuel

Tehran: A senior Iranian official again insisted in remarks published on Saturday that Tehran would not give up its right to produce its own nuclear fuel, which other countries fear will be diverted to military purposes. "That is something that Iran will not accept and Iran strongly resisted it in negotiations in Paris" with European states last month, Hossein Mousavian, was quoted as saying by the Tehran Times. Mousavian said the talks on July 29 and 30 "had reached a very complicated and difficult stage" but added, "the negotiators

are determined to continue their talks." The Europeans had told Iran "we recognise your right to possess peaceful (nuclear technology) and we give an international guarantee to provide you with nuclear fuel and facilitate your efforts to gain access to nuclear technology," he said. But they had added "since the fuel cycle in Iran may be diverted toward a nuclear weapons program in the future, we want you to relinquish it as a confidence building measure." This was unacceptable to Tehran, Moussavian said. On Wednesday Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi asserted the Islamic republic had a "legitimate right" to enrich uranium, the most sensitive part of the nuclear fuel cycle that the country is under pressure to abandon.

The News, 8 August 2004

Nuclear programme

President Pervez Musharraf has once again reiterated that the nuclear programme would not be rolled back and that all necessary efforts for its upgrading would be made. Attending a briefing by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, the president declared that the nuclear programme is a national asset and noted that with the bold and untiring efforts of the engineers and scientists, the programme is well on the road to progress and development. The nuclear programme of Pakistan is the thorn in the side of the India, Israel and certain western states. In the past Pakistan because of its atomic programme also had to face a lot of objections and sanctions by the US. But every government, with the resources and technical skills of the experts continued to move ahead on the programme until Pakistan emerged as the only Muslim atomic power. Needless to say this capability has played a central role in the security, independence and sovereignty of Pakistan.

Dawn, 8 August 2004

N-scandal was major problem: Cheney (Anwar Iqbal)

Washington, Aug 7: US Vice-President Dick Cheney has said that the presence of a network of nuclear proliferators in Pakistan

was one of the major problems the Bush administration had to tackle. Mr Cheney's remarks, delivered at a Friday evening election rally in Minnesota, come amid increased efforts by some US lawmakers to re-impose strict economic sanctions on Pakistan over the nuclear issue. "We knew, through intelligence sources, that a man named A.Q. Khan, who had developed the Pakistan nuclear weapons programme, after he'd finished that work for Pakistan, had then gone into business for himself," said Mr Cheney. "He was selling nuclear weapons technology to some of the worst regimes in the world - the North Koreans, the Iranians, and the Libyans, in particular. Moammer Qadhafi, in Libya, was one of his best customers," he said. The US vice president said that Dr Khan, who manufactured centrifuges needed to enrich uranium to the weapons grade, later sold these equipment to the countries that are considered rogue states in Washington.

Daily Times, 8 August 2004

Pakistan and India are comfortable with N-status

Washington: A conference held here recently to assess the key military elements that affect strategic stability in a nuclearised South Asia, came to the conclusion that both countries are comfortable with their present nuclear status. While India feels that its large geographic size and abundant natural boundaries make its nuclear force relatively invulnerable, its more relaxed retaliation-only strategy affords it time to react to any irrational nuclear attack. Indian planners are at least publicly adamant that any Indian response to nuclear use would be certain and massive. Pakistan feels that a mobile and dispersed nuclear arsenal is nearly invulnerable, even from increasingly advanced Indian conventional capabilities. The conference, sponsored by the Naval Postgraduate Schools, Monterey Centre for Contemporary Conflict, was attended by about 60 serving and retired military officials, diplomats, intelligence analysts, and non-governmental experts, several of them from Pakistan.

Daily Times, 9 August 2004

Iran, North Korea have advanced on N-arms: NYT

New York: Intelligence officials and nuclear experts say Iran and North Korea have both made significant progress developing nuclear weapons programs in the past year, the New York Times reported on Sunday. US officials want to step up covert actions to stall Iran alleged nuclear arms efforts, in a tacit acknowledgment that the diplomatic initiatives with European and Asian allies have failed to curtail the programs, the daily said. Meanwhile North Korea now probably has enough weapons-grade plutonium to test a weapon in the future, despite toughened sanctions and several rounds of six-nation talks aimed at curtailing such efforts, the Times said.

Daily Times, 9 August 2004

US mulls many means to keep nukes out of Iran

Washington: White House national security adviser Condoleezza Rice on Sunday said the United States could not rule out taking covert action against Iran to disrupt its nuclear weapons program. We will use many means to try to disrupt these programs, Rice told NBC television. The president will look at all the tools that are available to us. Rice was asked about a New York Times report that quoted unnamed senior US officials as saying they were seeking to step up covert actions against Iran to disrupt or delay as long as we can Tehran nuclear weapons drive.

The Associated Press, 9 August 2004

18 Hurt in Japan Nuclear Plant Accident

Tokyo: A steam leak at a Japanese nuclear power plant injured 18 people Monday, and five were in critical condition after suffering heart and lung failure, officials said. Public broadcaster NHK reported one worker died, but that could not be independently verified. There was no threat of radioactivity spreading beyond the plant, said Takahiro Seno, spokesman for Kansai Electric Power. The plant automatically shut down and

officials were investigating the cause of the accident, he said. A local fire department official said 18 people were injured. Five were hospitalized for heart and lung failure. Steam spewed inside the turbine building area at the No. 3 nuclear reactor in Mihama, 200 miles west of Tokyo, Seno said. A string of safety problems at Tokyo's nuclear power plants has undermined public faith in nuclear energy and left the energy program in limbo. The worst was a radiation leak at a fuel-reprocessing plant in Tokaimura, northeast of Tokyo, that killed two workers and affected hundreds of others in 1999. The accident was caused by two workers who tried to save time by mixing excessive amounts of uranium in buckets instead of using special mechanized tanks.

The Associated Press, 9 August 2004

Iran Said Sending Weapons to Insurgents

Najaf: With fighting raging for a fifth day in Najaf, Iraq's interim defense minister on Monday accused neighboring Iran of sending weapons to Shiite insurgents here, calling Iran his nation's "first enemy." Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan made the comments during an interview broadcast on the Arab-language television network al-Arabiya. "There are Iranian-made weapons that have been found in the hands of criminals in Najaf who received these weapons from across the Iranian border," Shaalan said. "From far and near, the facts that we have say that what has happened to the Iraqi people is done by the one who is considered as the first enemy." Since Thursday, U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces have battled fighters in Najaf supporting militant Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi militia. The U.S. military says hundreds of militants were killed in fierce battles Thursday and Friday; the militiamen have put the number far lower. The latest violence Monday killed three people, including two policemen, and injured 19 others, said Hussein Hadi of Najaf's al-Hakim hospital said.

International Herald Tribune, 9 August 2004

Diplomacy Fails to Slow Advance of Nuclear Arms (David E. Sanger)

Ennebunkport: American intelligence officials and outside nuclear experts have concluded that the Bush administration's diplomatic efforts with European and Asian allies have barely slowed the nuclear weapons programs in Iran and North Korea over the past year, and that both have made significant progress. In a tacit acknowledgment that the diplomatic initiatives with European and Asian allies have failed to curtail the programs, senior administration and intelligence officials say they are seeking ways to step up unspecified covert actions intended, in the words of one official, "to disrupt or delay as long as we can" Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear weapon. But other experts, including former Clinton administration officials, caution that while covert efforts have been tried in the past, both the Iranian and North Korean programs are increasingly self-sufficient, largely thanks to the aid they received from the network built by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the former leader of the Pakistani bomb program. "It's a much harder thing to accomplish today," said one senior American intelligence official, "than it would have been in the 90's."

Daily Times, 10 August 2004

Kasuri rules out IAEA nuclear inspections

Tehran: Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri insisted on Monday that Pakistan was cooperating with a UN probe into Iran's suspect nuclear programme, but ruled out allowing inspectors into the country as part of the crucial investigation. "Pakistan is a responsible member of the international community. We have been cooperating with the IAEA and sharing information," said Kasuri, who is on a two day visit to Tehran. He told reporters at a joint press conference with Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi, "As far as inspections of Pakistan are concerned, that is out of the question. We are not a signatory to the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty)." Kharazi says Iran can't be referred to UNSC for curbs:

Kharazi said he was confident the IAEA's board of governors would not refer Iran to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions, a step the United States says is now more likely. "America says that Iran's dossier should be referred to the Security Council. But for that to happen, there have to be violations - whereas Iran has not committed any violations," he asserted.

The News, 10 August 2004

Pakistan sets limit to cooperation in Iran N-probe

Tehran: Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri insisted on Monday that Pakistan was cooperating with a UN probe into Iran's suspected nuclear programme, but ruled out allowing inspectors into Pakistan as part of the crucial investigation. "Pakistan is a responsible member of the international community. We have been cooperating with the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and sharing information," he told a press conference. Kasuri, who is on a two-day visit to Tehran, said: "Of course we will cooperate and are cooperating. But as far as inspections of Pakistan are concerned, that is out of the question. We are not a signatory of the NPT (nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty)." He refused to elaborate on how Pakistan would help the IAEA in this regard. Kasuri said that the pipeline project linking Iran's natural gas to India would be safe as it passed through Pakistan, but he noted that New Delhi was still undecided on this import route.

Dawn, 10 August 2004

US asks Iran to abandon N-programme

Washington, Aug 9: US President George Bush said on Monday that Iran "must abandon her nuclear ambitions" and vowed to stand with United States allies to pressure Tehran to do so. "Iran must abandon her nuclear ambitions," Mr Bush said during a campaign event, stressing international diplomacy at a time when his Democratic White House rival, Senator John Kerry, has accused him of alienating US allies. "We've got to continue to keep pressure on the government," said Mr Bush. He said that the

United States was trying to promote a change of government in Iran, using radio broadcasts and urging Iranians living in the United States "to send message to their loved ones".

Daily Times, 10 August 2004

National Authority's seminar: Officials told about chemical arms treaty

Islamabad: The National Authority, comprising of officials of the armed forces and the Foreign Affairs Ministry, for the implementation of Pakistan's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) held a seminar on Monday to familiarise representatives of the chemical industry and government officials about the workings of the convention. The National Authority is part of the United Nations Division of the Foreign Office, which deals with issues of international security, disarmament, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. UNEC Additional Secretary Tariq Osman Haider inaugurated the seminar. Brig Rafiuz Zaman, director general Disarmament-C, and Lt Col Mussarat Naeem, director of the National Authority, briefed the participants of the seminar. Pakistan ratified the CWC in October 1997 and the convention has 169 State Parties now. The convention prohibits the development of chemical weapons and their precursors by banning their production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention and transferring directly or indirectly. The use of chemical weapons is banned and no military preparations can be made to use these weapons.

The New York Times, 10 August 2004

Bush Sees Joint World Effort to Press Iran on Nuclear Issue (Elisabeth Bumiller)

Annandale, Aug. 9: President Bush said Monday that the United States would maintain pressure on Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons program, emphasizing that his administration was working with other countries and not confronting Iran on its own. "Iran must comply with the demands of the free world, and that's where we sit right now," Mr. Bush told a Republican

crowd at an "Ask President Bush" campaign event in this Washington suburb. "And my attitude is that we've got to keep pressure on the government, and help others keep pressure on the government, so there's kind of a universal condemnation of illegal weapons activities." The president has come under searing criticism from his Democratic competitor, Senator John Kerry, for what Mr. Kerry calls Mr. Bush's go-it-alone approach to foreign policy, which he says has left the United States isolated in the world. Mr. Kerry has also attacked Mr. Bush for allowing Iran to move forward with its nuclear ambitions while going to war with Iraq, where almost no evidence of a nuclear weapons program was found.

International Herald Tribune, 10 August 2004

Four die in steam leak at Japan nuclear plant

A leak of high-pressure steam at a Japanese nuclear power plant killed four workers on Monday but authorities said no radiation escaped in the accident, which took place on the anniversary of the 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki. The incident was one of three at separate plants across Japan on Monday and is sure to increase public distrust of the industry in a country that depends on nuclear power for a third of its energy needs. "Radioactive materials weren't contained in the steam that leaked out...there is no impact from radiation on the surrounding environment," an official from the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) told a news conference. Police initially said five workers had been scalded to death when a pipe burst, but later corrected the figure to four. Seven others were injured, three seriously, officials said.

China Daily, 10 August 2004

Japan nuke accident raises doubts over aging plant

A leak of high-pressure steam that killed four workers at a Japanese nuclear power station has raised questions about the condition of some of Japan's aging facilities and the rigor of procedures for maintaining

them. Although there was no radiation leak, four workers were scalded to death and seven others injured when steam leaked from a broken pipe at the Mihama plant operated by Kansai Electric Power Co. in Monday's incident, the worst in terms of deaths at a Japanese nuclear facility. Bathers enjoy the beach near Mihama Nuclear Power Plant in the northern Japanese town of Mihama, Japan August 10, 2004, after a leak of high-pressure steam at the nuke plant killed four workers on Monday. But authorities said no radiation escaped in the accident.

The New York Times, 10 August 2004

Moscow's Nuclear Past Is Breeding Perils Today (C.J. Chivers)

Moscow, Aug. 5: The radiation experts arrived at Viktor Avram's auto repair shop last month, appearing beside the wall separating the shop from an enormous factory. The men warned Mr. Avram to take care where he strolled. "They told me I could walk on the road," he recalled, nodding toward a dirt track that descends to the Moscow River. "But they said I should stay to the left. To the right is radiation." Mr. Avram works beside a disquieting legacy of the early years of the nuclear arms race, a large radioactive waste site inside a city of 11 million people. On the territory of the former Soviet Union the work of finding and recovering radioactive waste goes on not only near the plutonium-producing reactors in Siberia or the Urals, or on the test range in Kazakhstan that in 1949 detonated Moscow's first atomic bomb. It also occurs in the midst of daily life in Moscow - near offices, factories, train stations, highways and homes.

Khaleej Times, 10 August 2004

Iran's nuclear ambitions

Teheran remains in the news quite often these days. Washington is hell-bent on imposing sanctions on it over its nuclear programme, which Iran says is meant only for peaceful purposes - mainly, generation of electricity to meet the rising demand. But Iran last month had said that it had resumed

making parts for uranium enrichment centrifuges, which can be used to make bomb material. If Iran says that its nuclear programme is for generation of power, and it means what it says, then it must make every effort to remove suspicion in the eyes of the world.

The Indian Express, 10 August 2004

Pak blames Indian lobby for N-check Bill in US Congress

Islamabad, Aug, 9: Indirectly blaming the Indian lobby in the US Congress for piloting a new Bill calling for stringent monitoring of its adherence to non-proliferation, Pakistan today said it hoped the legislation is not made as abrasive as it looks. The Bill calls for annual certification by the US President about Pakistans adherence to non-proliferation and vests him with powers to cut down US aid in case of any violations. "We have seen this legislation, which has been introduced. We will continue to monitor the situation and would like to work with the Congress," Pakistans Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan said. Without directly naming the Indian lobby in the Congress, he said, "The sponsors belong to a certain lobby." A top Al Qaeda suspect, captured in Dubai over his alleged role in attempts to kill President Pervez Musharraf, was questioned today in Pakistan. "He is under questioning by investigators," Information Minister Sheikh Rashid said. "He is required in many terrorist cases for interrogation."

Southasianmedia.net, 10 August 2004

Iran seeks support on N-technology

Vienna: Iran is demanding Europe's leading powers back its right to nuclear technology that could be used to make weapons, dismayed the Europeans and strengthening Washington's push for U.N. sanctions, a European Union official and diplomats said Monday. Declining to respond to a list of demands presented by Iran last week - whose contents were made available to The Associated Press - the Europeans are urging the Iranian government to instead make good on a pledge to clear up suspicions

about its nuclear ambitions. But diplomats said Iran's demands undermine the effort by France, Germany and Britain to avoid a confrontation. They had hoped to persuade Tehran to give up technology that can produce nuclear arms, but now are closer to the Bush administration's view that Iran should be referred to the U.N. Security Council for violating the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the diplomats said.

The Japan Times, 10 August 2004

The dream of nuclear disarmament

The world sleeps easier since the end of the superpower competition and its accompanying threat of nuclear annihilation, but fears that a rogue state or terrorist group might acquire nuclear weapons have grown. That concern has been magnified by the increasingly visible failings of the global nonproliferation order. Four decades ago, there were fears that the world would have two dozen nuclear weapons states. That dark vision did not come to pass. Today, there are only five "recognized" nuclear-weapons states -- Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States -- and three "gray" states -- India, Israel and Pakistan -- who have such weapons but are not recognized by the international community as "nuclear-weapons states." Several countries that could have developed nuclear weapons did not. One country, South Africa, developed them and then destroyed them. Ukraine and Kazakhstan inherited nuclear weapons with the breakup of the Soviet Union, but gave them up rather than keep them.

Dawn, 11 August 2004

IAEA blames Khan network for uranium traces in Iran

London, Aug 10: UN nuclear inspectors have reached a "tentative conclusion" that traces of enriched uranium detected in Iran came from equipment provided by a smuggling network run by Pakistan's disgraced former nuclear chief scientist, Jane's Defence Weekly reported on Monday. The traces have been at the heart of an ongoing international dispute over whether Tehran has reneged on its obligations to

inform the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of all enrichment activities. "IAEA inspectors have reached a tentative conclusion that the contamination came from equipment provided by the nuclear smuggling network headed by Pakistan scientist A.Q. Khan," the magazine said, quoting "sources close to the agency." It said inspectors believe they can confirm that a sample of uranium enriched to 54 per cent, found at one Iranian site, had come from Pakistani equipment. "The confirmation was only possible after Islamabad gave the IAEA data to verify the uranium source and the US provided a simulation of the Pakistani nuclear programme that matched the account," the magazine said.

Dawn, 11 August 2004

US may opt for quick-fix: Iran's nuclear programme (Simon Tisdall)

London: The US charge sheet against Iran is lengthening almost by the day, presaging destabilizing confrontations this autumn and maybe a pre-election October surprise. The Bush administration is piling on the pressure over Iran's alleged nuclear weapons programme. It maintains Tehran's decision to resume building uranium centrifuges wrecked a long-running EU-led dialogue and is proof of bad faith. The US will ask a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency on September 13 to declare Iran in breach of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, a prelude to seeking punitive UN sanctions. Iran's insistence that it seeks nuclear power, not weapons, is scoffed at in Washington. John Bolton, the hawkish US under-secretary of state for arms control, says there is no doubt what Tehran is up to. He has hinted at using military force should the UN fail to act. "The US and its allies must be willing to deploy more robust techniques" to halt nuclear proliferation, including "the disruption of procurement networks, sanctions and other means". No option was ruled out, he said last year.

The News, 11 August 2004

Nukes cause all the trouble (M B Naqvi)

August 6 and 9 were the days that forced one to ponder over atomic weapons. There is global unanimity that these are not weapons of war; they are evil machines of death and destruction aimed at life itself. There is no defence against this monster; it does not discriminate between civilians and soldiers or between man and animals. But exclusive possession of this engine of death by a few countries conferred tremendous power and influence on them. Others dearly sought NWMDs as a currency of power and status among the international community. India did just that. Pakistan acquired them to get even with India. Thinkers and humanists everywhere have ran peace movements that put the nuclear powers on the defensive, though the interplay of money, military power, politics and immense benefits for key personnel has caused the preservation of WMDs. In fact, the bomb acquired a key role. Still, the big five do not brag about these weapons the way Indians and Pakistanis went gaga over their achievements in making them. In South Asia, peace movements of the CND type are small and weak. These two proud states shout that their nuclear deterrents, being invincible, have made them secure. Many of their people have come to believe that.

The New York Times, 11 August 2004

Rust and Neglect Cited at Japan Atom Plant (James Brooke)

Tokyo, Aug, 11: A section of steam pipe that blew out Monday, killing four workers at a Japanese nuclear power plant, had not been inspected in 28 years and had corroded from nearly half an inch to a thickness little greater than metal foil, authorities said Tuesday. "To put it bluntly, it was extremely thin," Shoichi Nakagawa, Japan's minister of the economy, trade and industry, said Tuesday after touring the power plant, in Mihama, about 200 miles west of here. "It looked terrible, even in the layman's view." Although the carbon steel pipe carried 300-degree steam at high pressure, it had not been inspected since the power plant opened in 1976. In April 2003, Nihon Arm, a maintenance subcontractor, informed the

Kansai Electric Power Company, the plant owner, that there could be a problem. Last November, the power company scheduled an ultrasound inspection for Saturday. "We thought we could postpone the checks until this month," Akira Kokado, the deputy plant manager, told reporters at Mihama. "We had never expected such rapid corrosion." But on Monday, four days before the scheduled shutdown for the inspection, superheated steam blew a two-foot-wide hole in the pipe, scalding four workmen to death and injuring five others seriously. The steam that escaped was not in contact with the nuclear reactor, and no nuclear contamination has been reported.

The Associated Press, 11 August 2004

Japan Tries to Restore Nuclear Confidence (Audrey McAvooy)

Tokyo: The Japanese government worked to shore up public confidence in the nuclear power industry Tuesday, a day after the country's deadliest reactor accident killed four people. Authorities launched an investigation, with dozens of police and nuclear energy officials visiting the plant to determine whether operator Kansai Electric Power was negligent. Politicians called for a review of nuclear plant safety. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi urged an inquiry so that "nothing be hidden from the nation." He told a Cabinet meeting he didn't want the public to grow uneasy about nuclear energy, the source of more than 30 percent of Japan's power. But experts warned that the worn-out 28-year-old cooling pipe that ruptured could be an omen of trouble ahead. A series of mishaps at nuclear plants have tested public tolerance for nuclear energy. Four died Monday when the corroded pipe burst, spewing boiling water and steam onto workers. Seven people were injured, two of them critically.

International Herald Tribune, 11 August 2004

Hunting nuclear waste dumped in Moscow (C. J. Chivers)

Moscow: The radiation experts arrived at Viktor Avram's auto repair shop last month,

appearing beside the wall separating the shop from an enormous factory next door. The men warned Avram to take care where he strolled. "They told me I could walk on the road," he recalled, nodding toward a dirt track that descends to the Moscow River. "But they said I should stay to the left. To the right is radiation." Avram works beside a disquieting legacy of the early years of the nuclear arms race, a large radioactive waste site inside a city of 11 million people. In the territory of the Soviet Union the work of finding and recovering radioactive waste does not go on solely near the plutonium-producing reactors in Siberia or the Urals and on the test range in Kazakhstan where Moscow's first atomic bomb was detonated in 1949. It also proceeds in the midst of daily life in Moscow - near offices, factories, train stations, highways and homes.

The New York Times, 11 August 2004

An American Hiroshima (Nicholas D. Kristof)

Aspen: If a 10-kiloton nuclear weapon, a midget even smaller than the one that destroyed Hiroshima, exploded in Times Square, the fireball would reach tens of millions of degrees Fahrenheit. It would vaporize or destroy the theater district, Madison Square Garden, the Empire State Building, Grand Central Terminal and Carnegie Hall (along with me and my building). The blast would partly destroy a much larger area, including the United Nations. On a weekday some 500,000 people would be killed. Could this happen? Unfortunately, it could - and many experts believe that such an attack, somewhere, is likely. The Aspen Strategy Group, a bipartisan assortment of policy mavens, focused on nuclear risks at its annual meeting here last week, and the consensus was twofold: the danger of nuclear terrorism is much greater than the public believes, and our government hasn't done nearly enough to reduce it.

Asahi Shimbun, 11 August 2004

No nuke is good news, but verification is ke (Tetsuya Endo)

The effort to curb the spread of nuclear weapons has suffered harsh ordeals in recent years. The Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a key focus of the anti-nuclear movement, has been challenged on various fronts by such non-signatory nations as India, Pakistan and Israel, as well as by signatory members such as Iraq, Iran, North Korea and Libya. A deadly new threat, characterized by links between terrorism and nuclear capabilities, is also rearing its ugly head. Within these developments, the greatest concern to Japan is the situation in North Korea, and what action to adopt with regard to the nuclear ambitions of that reclusive state. Among major recent moves to strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation stance, a "nonproliferation action plan for weapons of mass destruction" was adopted at the Group of Eight Summit of industrialized nations convened in the United States this June. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei, meanwhile, has also submitted his own proposal. These concepts share in common their desire to place some type of regulation on the exporting of equipment and technology related to uranium enrichment and nuclear fuel reprocessing (plutonium extraction), activities that clearly lead to nuclear proliferation.

People's Daily, 12 August 2004

Informal meeting on Korean Peninsula nuclear issue ends in New York

The two-day informal meeting on Korean Peninsula nuclear program ended Wednesday in New York, and US officials said there was no substantive bilateral contact between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), two main parties to the issue. Sponsored by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, the seminar on Northeast Asian Security was aimed at exploring possible solutions to the standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear program. Delegates from five participating countries

at the six-party talks, China, DPRK, Japan, South Korea and the United States, attended the informal meeting. Chinese delegate Yang Xiyu, director of the Korean Peninsula Affairs Office, said earlier Tuesday that exchanges in various forms and through different channels help solve sensitive regional and other issues such as the Pyongyang's nuclear issue. Earlier reports said that US special envoy for Korean affairs Joseph DeTrani and deputy chief of US affairs at the DPRK Foreign Ministry Li Gun, were seen talking with each other during the break of the meeting.

Daily Times, 12 August 2004

Pakistan won't sign NPT, CTBT: Kasuri
(Shaukat Piracha)

Islamabad: Pakistan told Japan on Wednesday that it would not sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) because its nuclear programme was defensive. Our nuclear programme is quite specific. We have had three wars with India and our fears are not imaginary, Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri said at a press conference after talks with his Japanese counterpart Yoriko Kawaguchi. To expect Pakistan to do something which its people and its government feel will lower the threshold of our security will be unrealistic. He said Pakistan and India had agreed to nuclear confidence building measures last June. There was another proposal that both countries would remain in touch with other international nuclear powers, he added. He said Pakistan had shared information about proliferation with Japan. We have shared all the information that we had. We are mindful of the security concerns of the Japanese government. The two countries' foreign secretaries will hold talks in October in Tokyo and Mr Kasuri will visit Japan in late November. They also agreed to a business dialogue in Karachi in February. The Pakistan and Japan economic and security dialogue will continue, Mr Kasuri said.

Daily Times, 12 August 2004

DPRK N-talks not yet on horizon: Seoul

Seoul: South Korea on Wednesday saw no new round of working-level talks on North Korea nuclear crisis in sight, but said the six parties involved remained committed to more discussions. A spurt of diplomacy in July and early August had raised expectations that the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, Russia and China would send deputy chief negotiators to Beijing as early as this week to pave the way for a fourth round of negotiations on dismantling the North's nuclear programmes. Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon could not say when the talks might take place, but said he was optimistic they would still occur soon. He believes there is a consensus among the countries for a need to have specific discussions on substantive issues, Ban told a news briefing.

His optimism came despite a barrage of daily verbal attacks by North Korea state-run media lambasting a US demand that Pyongyang abandon its nuclear ambitions in exchange for acceptance into the international community and economic aid.

The News, 12 August 2004

Iranian nuke program threaten stability says US

Washington: The United States renewed accusations that Iran is secretly trying to develop atomic weapons and said that the program along with Tehran's possession of missiles threaten Middle East and global security. "They've got a clandestine weapons program which combined with delivery systems is a threat to stability," deputy State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said. The United States has serious concerns about Iran's missile programs and views Iran's efforts to further develop its missile capabilities as a threat to the region and to United States interests, he said later in a statement.

Dawn, 12 August 2004

Iran tests ballistic missile, vows to continue nuclear plan

Tehran, Aug. 11: Iran on Wednesday tested an upgraded version of its ballistic missile (Shahab-3), two weeks after Israel tested its

Arrow II anti-missile missile, the official IRNA news agency reported. "The defence ministry announced that the latest version of the Shahab-3 was tested today," IRNA said. "This experiment on the ground was aimed at evaluating modifications that were recently made to the missile on the basis of research results," it said. The missile is considered the mainstay of Iran's military technology and portrayed as purely defensive and dissuasive, but specifically as a weapon against Israel. In the July 28 test of Israel's Arrow II missile, the Jewish state made it clear the improved anti-missile system was aimed squarely at fending off any attack by Iran. Iranian Defence Minister Ali Shamkhani had said on Saturday that the test of the Shahab-3 was imminent, adding that the improvements to the missile "not only concern its range, but other specifications as well." Tehran fears Israel could strike its controversial nuclear programme, which Washington suspects is being used to covertly develop weapons. "The Israelis are trying hard to improve the capacity of their missiles, and we are also trying to improve the Shahab-3 in a short time," Mr Shamkhani said, denying that the Islamic republic was working on a more advanced Shahab-4.

Daily Times, 12 August 2004

Hand over N-weapons and know-how, Iran tells UK

London: Iran is boldly demanding that Britain, France and Germany actively support its quest for advanced nuclear technology for both civilian and military purposes, rather than opposing it, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported on Wednesday. Iranian officials made the extraordinary demand during talks in Paris on defusing international tension over Tehran nuclear intentions, the newspaper diplomatic editor reported. During the meeting, which the Daily Telegraph said took place earlier this month, the Europeans tried to convince their Iranian counterparts to honour an earlier deal to suspend a controversial uranium enrichment programme. Instead the Iranians set out their

own demands, stating that Europe three biggest nations two of them nuclear powers should back Iranian quest for advanced (nuclear) technology, including those of dual use. Britain, France and Germany, they said, should remove impediments preventing Iran from having such technology, and do so regardless of any legal (or) political... limitations, an apparent reference to US pressure or international sanctions, the newspaper said.

Daily Times, 12 August 2004

Iran won't abandon nuclear technology: Khatami

Tehran: Iran declared on Wednesday that threats to send its nuclear case to the UN Security Council would not make it drop its quest for peaceful nuclear technology. The statement by President Mohammad Khatami came after US officials expressed growing confidence in recent days that international resolve was hardening to deal with Iran nuclear programme and report it to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. We don't want our case to be sent to the United Nations. We hope to resolve the issue through justifications and explanations, Khatami told reporters. But if anyone wants to deprive us of our right (to peaceful nuclear technology) we and our nation would be ready to pay the price, he added.

Hindustan Times, 12 August 2004

Safety in atoms

The accident at the Mihama nuclear power plant in Japan the worst in that country history is another reminder that there is no such thing as too much caution in the nuclear power industry. At least four people were killed and several others hospitalised with burns after steam leaked out of the plant. While it's relief that the leak didn't have any radioactive material, it's still a cause for concern that such a high degree of negligence was involved. Curiously, the same Mihama plant had leaked 55 tonnes of radioactive water from its reactor in 1991, which suggests the possibility of a flawed reactor design. If so, the authorities will be

hard put to explain why they glossed over critical safety factors. Given the dearth of natural resources in Japan, it's not surprising that nuclear power provides some 30 per cent of the country energy needs. But the series of accidents and attempted cover-ups that have dogged the industry of late only undermine public confidence. This is unfortunate for all countries that turn towards nuclear energy as a viable alternative to fast depleting conventional energy sources.

Asahi Shimbun, 12 August 2004

Blame game roiling in nuclear accident

Three companies are now trying to duck the blame for Monday's accident at the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant in Fukui Prefecture that killed four workers and injured seven. The accident occurred when a section of pipe in the turbine building of the No. 3 reactor ruptured and spewed hot steam on the workers. The portion of pipe, which had corroded from pressurized water, had been omitted from checklists and not inspected since the reactor went into operation in 1976. The three companies in question are Kansai Electric Power Co., which runs the plant; Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, which was in charge of pipe inspections from 1987 to 1996; and Nihon Arm Co., currently commissioned by the power company to conduct inspections. Earlier reports stated that Nihon Arm, an Osaka-based company that took over the inspection task from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in 1996, had noticed the omission of the section of pipe from the checklist in April 2003 and informed Kansai Electric last November. But Kansai Electric put off inspecting the pipe, and instead assigned the task to regular annual inspections due to begin Saturday.

The News, 13 August 2004

World worried about Iran nuclear aims

Baku: Iran's nuclear ambitions remain a major worry for the world amid fears that states possessing weapons of mass destruction might cooperate with terrorist organizations, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said here Thursday. Speaking to

reporters after talks with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Rumsfeld noted that Iran had been on a list of countries that the United States describes as terrorist states for many years. "One of the gravest concerns the world faces is the nexus between a terrorist state that has weapons of mass destruction and terrorist networks," he said. "So it's understandable that nations, not just in this region but throughout the world, are so deeply concerned about what's taking place in Iran." Rumsfeld said he had discussed his concern over Iran's nuclear program with Aliyev, who recently hosted a visit by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami. The Iranian leader told reporters in Tehran on Wednesday that his country had made "a lot of progress" in developing nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and "will not seek permission from anyone" to continue its program. Rumsfeld's comments came at the end of a brief visit here during which he thanked the Azeris for providing troops to US-led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Rumsfeld noted that the United Nations was looking for countries to provide additional troops to protect a UN effort to organize elections in Iraq.

Asahi Shimbun, 13 August 2004

Criminal charges sought in fatal nuclear plant accident

Fukui: Prefectural police will pursue charges of professional negligence resulting in death in Monday's accident at the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant that killed four workers and injured seven, sources said Thursday. The accident in Fukui Prefecture occurred when a section of pipe at the plant's No. 3 reactor burst and blasted the workers with scalding steam. Corrosion had reduced the original 1-centimeter thickness of the pipe to only 1.4 millimeters in some spots. The minimum thickness of the pipe should have been 4.7 mm, according to safety standards. But the pipe section was not checked even once in the 28 years since the nuclear reactor started operating in 1976. In Tokyo, Shoichi Nakagawa, the economy, trade and industry minister, said the accident was a "disaster caused by human factor." He also said the

responsibilities of the companies in question ``should definitely be questioned." Investigators will try to find evidence that the companies involved knew the unchecked pipe risked rupturing but did nothing to reduce the danger, the sources said.

Nuclear Guide, 14 August 2004

US urges N. Korea to move on nuke proposal

Washington: The United States wants North Korea to respond to its June proposal for ending the Communist nation's suspected nuclear arms program after a rare meeting this week indicated talks progress remains glacial. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Washington showed flexibility by allowing aid incentives in its most concrete proposal at the last round of six-party talks and would go no farther until North Korea replied. "The burden, frankly, in my judgment, is on North Korea to make a move," Powell told Japanese reporters in an interview. The transcript was released on Friday. There was some speculation a North Korean negotiator, Ri Gun, would make a counter-proposal at a seminar in New York earlier this week, but U.S. officials said there was no breakthrough in a trip that was little more than symbolic. "Ri Gun came with no authority to talk," a Bush administration official, who asked not to be named, said. "He just reiterated standard North Korean policies." The National Committee on American Foreign Policy, invited Ri, as it did almost a year ago, for what the private think tank billed as informal talks.

People's Daily, 14 August 2004

Russia denies conducting nuclear tests

The Russian Foreign Ministry on Friday denied the country had conducted any nuclear tests in post-Soviet times. "Since gaining sovereignty, Russia has not conducted a single nuclear test," the ministry said in a statement, according to the Interfax news agency. The ministry issued the statement in reaction to allegations made by the mayor of the Japanese city of Hiroshima that Russia had conducted such tests. Russia, which ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear

Test Ban Treaty in 2000, "is strictly observing this commitment and is determined to do so in the future, if other countries follow suit," the statement said.

The New York Times, 14 August 2004

Indispensable Allies on Iran

Iraq provides a textbook lesson for a superpower about the dangers of going it alone in the world, but the Bush administration seems to suffer from attention deficit disorder. Some of its more hawkish officials are now pressing to confront Iran over its nuclear weapons development, regardless of whether America's main allies are convinced that diplomacy and inspections have been exhausted. Nobody in Washington proposes invading Iran, but administration officials hint darkly about starting an effort to destabilize Tehran's clerical dictatorship. Iran's ruling mullahs are justifiably unpopular. But unilateral American bullying is one sure way to rally flagging support for them among nationalistic Iranians. Stopping Iran from building nuclear weapons could eventually require strong, concerted international action. This is no time for Washington to strike out ahead of the allies whose active cooperation may well be needed in the months ahead.

The New York Times, 14 August 2004

The Nuclear Shadow (Nicholas D. Kristof)

If a 10-kiloton terrorist nuclear weapon explodes beside the New York Stock Exchange or the U.S. Capitol, or in Times Square, as many nuclear experts believe is likely in the next decade, then the next 9/11 commission will write a devastating critique of how we allowed that to happen. As I wrote in my last column, there is a general conviction among many experts - though, in fairness, not all - that nuclear terrorism has a better-than-even chance of occurring in the next 10 years. Such an attack could kill 500,000 people. Yet U.S. politicians have utterly failed to face up to the danger. "Both Bush administration rhetoric and Kerry rhetoric emphasize keeping W.M.D. out of the hands of terrorists as a No. 1 national

security priority," noted Michèle Flournoy of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "And when you look at what could have been done in the last few years, versus what has been done, there's a real gap." So what should we be doing? First, it's paramount that we secure uranium and plutonium around the world. That's the idea behind the U.S.-Russian joint program to secure 600 metric tons of Russian nuclear materials. But after 12 years, only 135 tons have been given comprehensive upgrades. Some 340 tons haven't even been touched.

China Daily, 15 August 2004

Aussie FM to visit N. Korea for nuke talks

Australia's foreign minister will pay a rare visit to North Korea this week for talks on its nuclear programme after creating a stir in Sydney by warning a North Korean missile would be able to hit Sydney. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said Sunday Australia wanted to use its good relationship with North Korea to advance six-nation talks under way aimed at persuading Pyongyang to drop its nuclear drive. He leaves on Monday having shaken diplomatic sensitivities here by warning that North Korea could launch a missile attack on the United States or on Australia, which he admitted has no capacity to defend itself against such attack. The comment on Friday sparked opposition charges that such "undiplomatic" talk would undermine the purpose of Downer's visit.

The New York Times, 15 August 2004

Uranium Reactors on Campus Raise Security Concerns (Matthew L. Wald)

Adison: The University of Wisconsin's nuclear reactor is an unassuming little model, operated (on Tuesdays and Thursdays only) by students in T-shirts and shorts. In the last few months it has been used to identify the source of pottery shards from an ancient settlement in India, to test whether heart stents work better if they have been irradiated, and to study the water and gas balance that would be present in a future generation of power reactors. But its fuel is

weapons-grade uranium. If it were stolen, experts say, it could give terrorists or criminals a major head start on an atomic bomb. And Wisconsin is not alone. Five other university research reactors around the country use weapons-grade fuel, even though the federal government has promised for more than two decades to reclaim their uranium and substitute a less enriched variety that is closer to the kind that commercial power plants use. "We have been on the list for conversion for at least 10 years," said Dr. Michael L. Corradini, the head of the nuclear engineering program here. "We've been waiting for funding from the Department of Energy."

Dawn, 15 August 2004

PAEC asked to make N-power plants locally (Ihtasham ul Haque)

Islamabad, Aug 14: The government has directed the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) to make long-term plans to manufacture a series of nuclear power plants in the country to meet power requirements. The government has also directed the PAEC's top officials to gradually reduce dependence on foreign experts in all future nuclear power plants and maximise involvement of local nuclear experts, leading to complete indigenization in this field and local production of nuclear power plants. Official sources told Dawn here on Friday that additional power capacity in the system was urgently required to meet power shortages, especially in low water months, when there was no surplus. At present there is surplus power capacity of 182-2000 MW in high water months. The PAEC was told to develop a long-term plan to produce maximum electricity by planning a series of new nuclear power plants with the active financial and administrative support of federal and provincial governments.

Daily Times, 16 August 2004

Powell presses N Korea to stop making nukes

Washington: The United States wants North Korea to respond to its June proposal for

ending the Communist nation's suspected nuclear arms programme after a rare meeting this week indicated talks progress remains glacial. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Washington showed flexibility by allowing aid incentives in its most concrete proposal at the last round of six-party talks and would go no farther until North Korea replied. "The burden, frankly, in my judgment, is on North Korea to make a move," Powell told Japanese reporters in an interview. The transcript was released on Friday. There was some speculation a North Korean negotiator, Ri Gun, would make a counter-proposal at a seminar in New York earlier this week, but US officials said there was no breakthrough in a trip that was little more than symbolic. "Ri Gun came with no authority to talk," a Bush administration official, who asked not to be named, said. "He just reiterated standard North Korean policies." The National Committee on American Foreign Policy, invited Ri, as it did almost a year ago, for what the private think tank billed as informal talks. A US negotiator and representatives of the other nations involved in the six-nation formal talks — South Korea, China, Japan and Russia — also attended. However, there were no separate meetings with the North Korean, diplomats said. Powell said there was "a brief exchange" between Ri and the US official "as one would have with any other attendee at such a conference but there was no substantive discussions."

Daily Yomiuri, 16 August 2004

Govt to submit N-disarmament bid to UNGA

The government has decided to submit a nuclear disarmament resolution to the U.N. General Assembly this autumn, the 11th such resolution since 1994. The decision to submit the resolution, titled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons," was made Saturday. As in previous cases, the government anticipates the resolution will be adopted with the support of most member countries. However, the United States is expected to oppose the resolution, as it has done each year since 2001. The resolution

will call on all countries to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as soon as possible and to suspend all nuclear tests until the CTBT comes into effect. The treaty bans all nuclear tests, including those carried out underground and in space. From the perspective of preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the resolution will welcome moves similar to Libya's announcement on Dec. 19 that it had given up its pursuit of chemical, biological and nuclear arms.

People's Daily, 17 August 2004

US downplays DPRK suggestion of not attending nuclear work talks

The United States downplayed on Monday suggestion from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) that it might not attend the upcoming round of six-party working-level talks aimed at ending the nuclear standoff on the Korean peninsula. "The last round of six-party talks, everyone agreed in principle that we would hold a plenary before the end of September, and we would hold working group meetings presumably some time before then," State Department spokesman Tom Casey told a news briefing. "We have not heard anything from the North Koreans at this point that would change our assumption about holding those talks. And at this point, we are working with the Chinese, with the other parties, and I think we will be moving forward on this shortly," Casey said. "Where we are today is pretty much where we have been in the past," Casey said. It is reported that the DPRK government said on Monday it would not attend working-level meetings ahead of the six-party talks and blasted the United States for demands that the DPRK fully disclose its nuclear activities.

People's Daily, 17 August 2004

DPRK says US hostile on nuke issue

DPRK says hostile United States policy has destroyed the fourth round of six-party talks to resolve the crisis on the peninsula. A spokesman for the DPRK Foreign Ministry urged the US to stop its hostile policy to NDPRK's nuclear program and lay the

foundation for negotiations, reported China Radio International Last Wednesday, the two-day informal meeting on Pyongyang's nuclear program ended in New York without substantial bilateral contact between Washington and Pyongyang. The closed-door meeting was organized by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. Delegates from five participating countries of the six-party talks, China, DPRK, Japan, South Korea and the United States, attended the informal meeting.

Daily Times, 17 August 2004

Nuclear proliferation: US keeping an eye on high-tech states (Wajahat Ali)

Washington: The United States is keeping an eye on high-technology states with greater nuclear knowledge but weaker export controls to check non-proliferation's problems, a State Department official who asked not to be named, told a group of journalists from India and Pakistan. Washington has also taken up the issue of stricter export controls with Pakistan and India, she said, adding that the dialogue began even before the A Q Khan scandal made headlines. The official claimed the key supplier states in Europe, Asia and the US introduced strong export controls over the last ten years, closing the loopholes previously exploited by nuclear proliferators. The potential miscreants were now turning to states like India and Malaysia where it is easier to procure nuclear material. She said that the US was striking a delicate balance in South Asia by fulfilling its global commitment towards non-proliferation as well as taking a pragmatic approach towards Pakistan and India. The official said the people of India and Pakistan were smart enough to handle the nuclear technology, but the US was still concerned about the possibility of an accidental use of these weapons. She added that policymakers in Washington were not even sure if nuclearisation of South Asia had enhanced the security of the region or not.

China Daily, 17 August 2004

China tests new guided missile - CNS report

China has successfully tested a new guided missile it says is highly accurate, according to a China News Service report. "Several days ago, a new model of a guided missile developed and built by China was tested and achieved satisfactory success," the CNS quoted project researcher Feng Dawei as saying. "The missile accurately hit its target with a high degree of precision." The agency did not give any details about the missile's range or payload or about the test site, saying only that it was developed by China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp. The report says Cao Gangchuan, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission and also minister of defense, attended and praised the test, saying the researchers have made huge contribution to the national defense. The CNS quoted Feng as saying researchers were committed to "promoting military modernization and realizing the grand task of reunifying the motherland."

The News, 17 August 2004

Iran to continue N-programme: Khamenei

Tehran: Iran is determined to proceed with its nuclear programme despite international concern, supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has insisted, the state news agency IRNA reported on Monday. "The Islamic Republic will continue on the reasonable path which will result in the peaceful use of nuclear energy without concerning itself about all this fuss and bother," Khamenei told Iranian ambassadors at a meeting in Tehran on Sunday, the agency said. Khamenei, without whose approval no official decision can be taken, stressed the need for Iran to convince the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of its intentions as the UN body has been investigating Iran's nuclear programme for more than a year. "But the means of winning their confidence must be based on reason," he added. He also recalled the outraged reaction in the West to the news that Iran was to resume manufacturing of parts for centrifuges to enrich uranium,

underlining that such production "does not contravene any international agreement". Despite suspicion from abroad, Iran has always insisted that its nuclear programme is entirely for civil purposes but since 2003 the IAEA has pointed the finger at the country's lack of cooperation in helping confirm that it is not secretly developing atomic weapons. The UN body intends to reopen its debate on Iran next month.

Reuters, 17 August 2004

North Korea Talks Still On, China Tells Downer (Benjamin Kang Lim)

Beijing: North Korea's refusal to take part in working-level talks on the nuclear crisis prompted a diplomatic flurry on Tuesday with China, the host of the talks, at the heart of efforts to keep the process on track. Beijing said no date has been set for the talks on dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear programs but gave no indication that the meeting had been canceled, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer told a news conference. In a sign China was fully engaged in trying to set up another round of talks, top Chinese diplomat Shen Guofang met in Beijing on Monday with Ri Gun, North Korea's chief delegate to the working-level talks. North Korea on Monday ruled out attending the working-level talks on its suspected nuclear arms programs and questioned the entire negotiating process, blaming hostile U.S. policy for Pyongyang's tougher stance. "The message I had from the Chinese was that ... no scheduled time has been determined for that meeting, not that the meeting has been canceled," Downer said.

Hindustan Times, 17 August 2004

Blind man's bluff (K. Subrahmanyam)

The US Democratic Party's national convention has indulged in a massive exercise of willing suspension of disbelief while drafting its non-proliferation policy. The party's document says, "We must work with every country to tighten export controls, stiffen penalties and beef up law enforcement and intelligence sharing. That way we can make absolutely sure that a

disaster like the A.Q. Khan black market network, which grew out of Pakistan's nuclear programme, can never happen again. We must also take steps to reduce tension between India and Pakistan and guard against the possibility of their nuclear weapons falling into the wrong hands." There is no mention of China's proliferation to Pakistan and Chinese weapon design being recovered in Libya. Neither are West European countries such as Britain, France, Germany and Switzerland, which were among the suppliers to Khan's black market network, mentioned nor how those countries are to be disciplined. While North Korea has been repeatedly cited as a source of future danger, there is no mention of the North Korea-Pakistan uranium enrichment-missile exchange arrangement. This is understandable because this took place during Bill Clinton's administration. Obfuscating China's central role in nuclear and missile proliferation is also a legacy of Clinton's tenure. So is the Indo-Pakistan hyphenation on the nuclear issue.

The News, 18 August 2004

IAEA to delay decision on Iran's N-programme: diplomats

Vienna: The UN's nuclear agency will not rule in a report next month on whether Iran's nuclear program is of a military nature, nor will it recommend bringing the case before the UN Security Council, diplomats said on Tuesday. "I suspect that this will be another of those reports where there is no 'smoking gun' which would allow the hardline countries to send this to the Security Council," a diplomat told AFP here on Tuesday. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is conducting a major probe into Iran's bid to generate electricity through nuclear power - seen by the United States as a cover for secret weapons development. However, the source said the report would not deliver "a so-called clean bill of health, which would allow Iran to say that they should be taken off the agenda of the board of governors" of the Vienna-based agency. According to the source, neither will it contain conclusive findings about traces of

highly enriched uranium discovered, which can be used to manufacture an atomic bomb, detected at facilities in Iran.

Daily Times, 18 August 2004

Iran threatens to destroy Israel's nuclear reactor

Tehran: Iran said Tuesday it would destroy Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor if the Jewish state were to attack Iran's nuclear facilities. A senior commander warned that Iranian missiles could reach Dimona. "If Israel fires a missile into the Bushehr nuclear power plant, it has to say goodbye forever to its Dimona nuclear facility, where it produces and stockpiles nuclear weapons," said the deputy chief of the elite Revolutionary Guards, Brig Gen Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr, in a statement. Zolqadr was referring to the site of Iran's first nuclear reactor at Bushehr, a coastal town on the Gulf. Built with Russian assistance, the reactor is due to come on stream in 2005. Iran says its nuclear programme is strictly for the generation of electricity. But Israel and the United States strongly suspect Iran is secretly building nuclear weapons. Israel has not threatened to attack the Bushehr reactor, but it has said it will not allow Iran to build a nuclear bomb. In 1981, Israeli fighter-bombers destroyed a nuclear reactor that was under construction outside Baghdad because it feared Iraq would acquire a nuclear weapon.

Nuclear Guide, 19 August 2004

IAEA must have one yardstick

Balance of power is a guarantee for peace. The Middle Eastern region needs this balance more than any other part of the world. Before Saddam's downfall, Israel and its Western mentors used shout from rooftops about the safety of Israelis from Iraqi missiles. Defying all international laws, Israel went to the extent of destroying Iraqi nuclear plant. The world has been seeing Israeli bellicosity since it came into being. The recent claim by Tehran that Israel and the US would not dare attack Iran since it could strike back anywhere in Israel with its latest missiles should not come as a

surprise because developing defence mechanism is every country's birth right. Hawks in Tel Aviv would have become restless to see the reports that a power in their neighbour is emerging that have carried out a successful test-firing of an upgraded version of its medium-range ballistic missile. To Washington's utter chagrin, military experts have said the unmodified Shahab-3 is already capable of striking Israel.

The New York Times, 19 August 2004

Bomb Materials at Campus Reactors

While experts worry that loosely guarded nuclear materials in foreign countries might fall into the hands of terrorists, six civilian research reactors at American universities continue to use weapons-grade uranium that could go a long way toward making a nuclear bomb. Although the reactors may not be particularly tempting targets for terrorists or criminals, they are disturbingly accessible ones - their security is far less rigorous than that imposed by the government for its own bomb-grade uranium stockpiles. It is time for the Energy Department to accelerate the universities' conversion to less dangerous fuels. As described by Matthew Wald in last Sunday's Times, the highly enriched uranium was supplied to research reactors in this country and abroad in past decades as a spin off of the government's Atoms for Peace program during the cold war. More recently, as concerns about nuclear proliferation replaced the national fear of losing the arms race, the Energy Department has spent millions of dollars to develop a less dangerous alternative fuel and to convert research reactors so they can use it.

Asahi Shimbun, 19 August 2004

Editorial: Black market of nukes

Japan should close in on shady networks in Asia. A little over six months ago, it came to light that Abdul Qadeer Khan, a high-profile Pakistani nuclear scientist, was running a nuclear weapons black market. We are still nowhere close to knowing the full extent of nuclear proliferation through this network,

but it is now clear that Asia has become an ominous theater of illegal nuke trade. According to Malaysian police, Khan's network had built a factory in suburban Kuala Lumpur to produce equipment parts for enriching uranium. The operation was revealed when some of those parts were about to be sold to Libya. However, trafficking on a grander scale could have been in the works. Three years ago, Libya obtained materials for uranium enrichment from this network. Investigations by the International Atomic Energy Agency and others strongly suggest that North Korea was involved in this deal.

People's Daily, 19 Daily 2004

China hopes six-party talks move forward

China is calling for all six parties in the Korean Peninsular nuclear stand-off to stay calm, flexible and continue talks despite inevitable difficulties. "We believe the parties have the willingness to continue to promote the procedure of peaceful talks," China Daily quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan as saying. Kong said it is unavoidable and also normal for differences to emerge in the course of talks. He spoke amid flurries of diplomatic activity aiming to set up a working-level meeting before the fourth round -- its main session -- on the nuclear issue. The six countries agreed at the end of third round six-party talks, held in Beijing in June, to have a fourth round before the end of September. They also agreed to hold a couple of working-level talks to lay the groundwork for the main session. On Monday, the DPRK said it cannot attend the working-level talks under the current circumstances, and accused the US of continuing to pursue a "hostile" policy towards it.

Daily Times, 19 August 2004

Iran warns of first strike on Israel

Doha: Iranian Defence Minister Ali Shamkhani warned on Wednesday that Iran might launch a preemptive strike against United States forces in the region to prevent an attack on its nuclear facilities. We will

not sit (with arms folded) to wait for what others will do to us. Some military commanders in Iran are convinced that preventive operations which the Americans talk about are not their monopoly, Mr Shamkhani told Al Jazeera television when asked if Iran would respond to an American attack on its nuclear facilities. America is not the only one present in the region. We are also present from Khost to Kandahar in Afghanistan; we are present in the Gulf and we can be present in Iraq, said Mr Shamkhani, speaking in Persian to the Arabic-language news channel through an interpreter. The US military presence (in Iraq) will not become an element of strength for Washington at our expense. The opposite is true, because their forces would turn into a hostage in Iranian hands in the event of an attack, he said. Mr Shamkhani, who was asked about the possibility of an American or Israeli strike against Iran atomic power plant in Bushehr, said: We will consider any strike against our nuclear installations as an attack on Iran as a whole and we will retaliate with all our strength. Where Israel is concerned, we have no doubt that it is an evil entity, and it will not be able to launch any military operation without an American green light. You cannot separate the two, Mr Shamkhani added.

The News, 19 August 2004

Iran can make uranium for nuke in a year, says US official

Washington: A hawkish US official said on Tuesday that Iran has warned it could make enough bomb-grade material in a year to produce a nuclear weapon, a threat that may boost a US push to report Tehran to the United Nations. In recent weeks, Iran has intensified its standoff over its nuclear programs and the United States has said it is increasingly likely the UN Security Council would take up the case against the Islamic republic for possible sanctions. US Under Secretary of State John Bolton said Iran had sought in negotiations with European powers to pressure them to ease their opposition to its suspected weapons programs. "They have told the EU three

(Britain, France and Germany) that they could produce, they could enrich enough uranium for a nuclear weapon within a year and they could produce nuclear weapons within the range of our own assessment, which is a way of threatening the Europeans to get them to back down," the senior official said at a Washington think tank session on Iran.

Daily Times, 19 August 2004

Bush defends missile defence

Ridley Park: President George W Bush defended his pursuit of a costly missile defence system on Tuesday and said those who oppose the idea do not understand the dangers the country faces in the 21st century. In his 32nd visit to Pennsylvania, a state he lost in 2000 but which is considered a major battleground this time, Bush portrayed himself as a decisive war leader, unlike his Democratic opponent John Kerry. Bush appeared at a Boeing Co plant in this Philadelphia suburb that employs 4,700 people and manufactures CH-47 Chinook helicopters that the US Army used in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The News, 20 August 2004

Pakistan against UNSC role in non-proliferation efforts

Durban: Pakistan called on members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on Thursday to oppose attempts of assigning responsibilities of non-proliferation to the Security Council, saying that both disarmament and non-proliferation should be promoted through universally negotiated treaty regimes. Speaking at the NAM's ministerial conference, Foreign Secretary Riaz Khokhar also underlined the need for collective actions to find solutions to common problems of humanity. "We must resist efforts by some states to assign the responsibilities for non-proliferation to the Security Council, where those states, which seek to perpetuate the monopoly of nuclear weapons, also wield the power of the veto," he added. Khokhar underlined that both disarmament and non-proliferation must be promoted through universally negotiated

treaty regimes, taking into account the security interests of all states.

Daily Times, 20 August 2004

DPRK 'negative' over US offer on nuclear weapons

Hong Kong: North Korea shows no sign of accepting US incentives to give up its nuclear weapons programmes, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said in remarks released on Thursday. Speaking after a rare visit to Pyongyang, Downer said North Korea also gave no assurances it would attend a new round of six-nation talks, the forum addressing the Stalinist state's nuclear ambitions. "Their response to the US package is pretty negative," Downer told Australian reporters before he left the North Korean capital late Wednesday for Hong Kong. But Downer said there were common elements in the thinking of both the United States and North Korea. "Both sides, certainly, but all parties talk about a nuclear freeze and the eventual dismantlement of the nuclear programme," he said. At the last round of six-nation talks in Beijing in June the United States said that if North Korea closed down all its nuclear weapons facilities over a three-month period, it would offer a package of economic and diplomatic rewards to the impoverished nation. Downer said he hoped his visit had given "some momentum" to the six-nation talks process. Asked if North Korea would attend a new round of talks, he said: "Well that remains to be seen. I hope so."

The New York Times, 20 August 2004

Iran Says It May Pre-empt Attack Against Its Nuclear Facilities (Nazila Fathi)

Tehran, Aug. 19: Iran's defense minister, Vice Adm. Ali Shamkhani, has warned that Iran may resort to pre-emptive strikes to prevent an attack on its nuclear facilities. Admiral Shamkhani made his comments in an interview on Al Jazeera television on Wednesday in response to a question about the possibility of an American or Israeli attack against Iran's nuclear projects. "We will not sit to wait for what others will do to

us," he said. "Some military commanders in Iran are convinced that preventive operations which the Americans talk about are not their monopoly. Any nation, if it feels threatened, can resort to that." There has been speculation here that Israel may attack Iran's nuclear sites, as it struck against Iraq's nuclear facilities at Osirak in 1981. A commander of Iran's hard-line Revolutionary Guards warned this week that Iran would strike Israel's reactor at Dimona if Israel attacked Iran's nuclear sites. "If Israel fires one missile at Bushehr atomic power plant, it should permanently forget about the Dimona nuclear center, where it produces and keeps its nuclear weapons," said the commander, Gen. Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr.

Daily Times, 20 August 2004

Iran wants IAEA to close file on its nuclear programme

Tehran: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should close the file on allegations that Iran is developing nuclear weapons, Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi said on Thursday. "If the case is not closed, it intensifies the suspicion about interference of political motives and pressures within the agency. And this is what the Americans are looking for," Kharazi asserted on state television. "To show its independence, IAEA, as a professional, technical and non-political organisation, should naturally insist on its own technical criteria and principles and quickly announce the issues have been resolved, if they have been resolved," Kharazi said. "We hope all the remaining issues are resolved with Iran's efforts and cooperation together with the IAEA's officials' efforts and there will be no reason Iran's situation becomes extraordinary in the agency. And we hope Iran's case is closed," he added. The United States has accused Iran of wantonly flouting international calls to curb its nuclear activities, saying Tehran is engaged in a "direct challenge" to the IAEA. Tehran says it is merely trying to generate nuclear energy and insists on its right to master the entire nuclear fuel cycle — something that could later be transformed

into a weapons programme. The IAEA board is due to deliver its report on Iran's nuclear activities at a meeting at the UN body's Vienna headquarters starting on September 13.

International Herald Tribune, 20 August 2004

North Korea resists U.S. nuclear incentives

Hong Kong: North Korea shows no sign of accepting U.S. incentives to give up its nuclear weapons programs, Australia's foreign minister, Alexander Downer, said in remarks issued on Thursday. Speaking after a rare visit to Pyongyang, Downer said North Korea had given no assurances that it would attend a new round of six-nation talks, the forum addressing the country's nuclear ambitions. At the last round of six-nation talks in Beijing in June, the United States said that if North Korea closed all its nuclear weapons facilities over a three-month period, Washington would offer a package of economic and diplomatic rewards to the impoverished nation.

Daily Times, 21 August 2004

US-South Korea war games undermining talks: DPRK

Seoul: North Korea said on Friday annual war games staged by the United States and South Korea were undermining six-party nuclear talks and forcing it to raise the "quality and quantity" of its own military deterrent. The comments, from a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman, came as negotiations between the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, China and Russia on dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear programmes remain in limbo. The computer-simulated drills, called Ulchi Focus Lens, are designed to test US and South Korean readiness for military emergencies on the Korean peninsula. They will run for 12 days from Aug 23. "Now that the US scenario for a war of aggression against the DPRK has entered the phase of its implementation, the DPRK is left with no option but to increase its war deterrent force both in quality and quantity," the spokesman

said in a statement carried by the North's official KCNA news agency. DPRK is short for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Daily Yomiuri, 21 August 2004

Japan, Russia OK plan to dismantle 2nd N-sub

The government plans to embark on a second project to help Russia dismantle its nuclear submarines in early 2005, following a similar project due to be completed in the autumn, sources said Tuesday. The vessel to be dismantled in the second project is a Victor-I class multipurpose submarine moored at a port near Vladivostok in Russia's Far Eastern coastal region, according to the sources. The Japanese and Russian governments began surveying the submarine in early July in preparation for its dismantlement, the sources said. They were speaking on condition of anonymity. About 40 retired nuclear submarines, mostly built during the Cold War era by the former Soviet Union, have been left to rust at several ports in Russia's Far Eastern region. The vessels still contain their nuclear reactors.

The Associated Press, 22 August 2004

Iran Plans to Build 2nd Nuclear Reactor

Iran: Iran said Sunday that it plans to build a second nuclear reactor with Russia's help and that at least two other European states have expressed interest in such a project, brushing aside U.S. accusations that the Islamic state wants to build atomic weapons. Russia is building Iran's first nuclear reactor, which was begun by West Germany but interrupted during the 1979 Islamic revolution. Damage caused to the nearly completed facility in Bushehr during Iran's 1980-88 war with Iraq also led to the postponement of its planned inauguration from 2003 to August 2006. Despite the delays and the project's \$800 million cost, Iranian nuclear officials say they want Russia to build more nuclear reactors to help generate greater amounts of electricity. The comments Sunday reflect Iran's determination to push ahead with its nuclear

program despite U.S. and international concerns that it seeks to develop nuclear weapons. The United States has been lobbying for the International Atomic Energy Agency to refer Iran's nuclear dossier to the Security Council, which could impose sanctions. Tehran denies seeking to develop weapons.

Terror Wire, 22 August 2004

Washington accused of ignoring nuclear terror threat (Andrew Gumbel)

The Bush administration insists that its top priority is keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists. But in a withering new book, one of America's foremost nuclear weapons experts argues that the White House has been so heedless of the threat that nuclear skepticism in one or more US cities is now 'more likely than not' over the next decade. Graham Allison, a former defence official under both Republican and Democratic administrations and now a leading researcher at Harvard, describes the Bush administration as 'reckless' for its failure to secure fissile materials around the world and its apparent lack of interest in preventing North Korea and Iran from becoming nuclear powers. In his book *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*, Mr Allison lays out a series of measures to kepticise the risk that al-Qa'ida or another group could either build or buy a nuclear weapon and then smuggle it into the United States. He demonstrates that the Bush White House, for all its bullish rhetoric, has taken none of them.

China Daily, 23 August 2004

N. Korea: 'Impossible' to join nuclear talks

North Korea said it was 'impossible' to hold new talks with the United States aimed at ending a stand-off over the communist country's nuclear weapons drive. A North Korean foreign ministry spokesman said a working-group meeting to prepare for new six-nation talks could not be opened because of Washington's hostile policy toward Pyongyang. 'This made it quite impossible

for the DPRK (North Korea) to go to the talks and deprived it of any elementary justification to sit at the negotiating table with the US,' he said in a statement carried through the North's official Korean Central News Agency. The statement also included unusually strong insults directed at US President George W. Bush, describing him as 'a tyrant that puts Hitler into the shade'. 'He is a political imbecile bereft of even elementary morality as a human being and a bad guy, the statement added.

Dawn, 23 August 2004

Japan reconsiders nuclear power (Eric Johnston)

Mihama: On the coast of the Japan Sea, two-and-a-half hours by train from Kyoto, is the quiet fishing village of Mihama. Noted for its harbour and beautiful beaches, it draws tourists from all over the country. When told by local television crews that the white buildings on the other side of the harbour house a nuclear power plant, and that an accident there killed four people this month, some holidaymakers decide to pack up and leave. Others shrug it off. As one of the teenage surfers says, it's too beautiful a day to worry. Besides, he says, aren't nuclear power plants extremely safe? Such blind public faith in nuclear power has allowed Japan to embrace the energy source at a time when many nations are reconsidering the wisdom of using it. Japan operates 52 plants around the country, providing roughly a third of the country's electric power.

The News, 23 August 2004

Iran to build more N-plants with Russian help

Tehran: Iran said on Sunday it was planning to build more nuclear power plants with Russian help, ignoring US concerns that by-products from the plants could be used to manufacture atomic bombs. We have contracts with Russia to build more nuclear reactors. No number has been specified but definitely our contract with Russia is to build more than one nuclear power plant, Asadollah Sabouri, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran, told

reporters. Sabouri also revealed that at least two European countries had expressed interest in the projects, although he refused to name them. They have given us documents expressing their readiness to join the projects. We welcome them. My message to the Europeans is that we have to pass the paperwork stage and go for binding contracts as soon as possible, he said. Sabouri said Iran's second nuclear reactor will be built in Bushehr, a coastal town in southern Iran, where Russia is already building Iran's first nuclear power plant. Sabouri said the Bushehr complex had the capacity of at least four nuclear reactors. He added Iran was already studying other sites in Iran for other possible reactors.

The International Tribune, 23 August 2004

Bush should focus on nuclear terrorism (H.D.S. Greenway)

Since Sept. 11, 2001, we Americans have all become like those who live on the San Andreas fault in California, going about their daily business but always mindful that one day the "big one" will come. Our political leaders scramble to issue color-coded warnings of impending doom. Al Qaeda spokesmen and Islamic Websites hiss their threats, and intelligence agencies pick up the lint from conspiracies - all maddeningly vague - but indicating that something big is headed our way, perhaps before the November election. One Al Qaeda spokesman, Suleiman Abu Gheith, said nine months after 9/11 that Muslim extremists had the "right" to kill four million Americans - "two million of them children, and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands." This is Al Qaeda's calculation of what the United States and Israel have done to Muslims. "The Americans have still not tasted from our hands what we have tasted from theirs. We have not reached parity with them," Gheith said. Students of terrorism have long known that there is really only one way that Al Qaeda can reach its perverted parity. As Robert Kagan has written, the nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction has become "the reigning foreign

policy paradigm of the post-9/11 era." And in the realm of real horror, nuclear weapons stand alone.

The New York Times, 23 August 2004

Roadblock at Yucca Mountain

A federal appeals court decision has thrown a gigantic roadblock in the way of efforts to create an underground burial site for nuclear wastes at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. A three-judge panel in the District of Columbia ruled last month that regulators could not simply require the repository to contain the wastes for 10,000 years, the standard set by the Environmental Protection Agency, but must instead ensure that Yucca could function acceptably for hundreds of thousands of years. That standard is so outlandishly stringent it may not be achievable. Unless Congress steps in to change the ground rules, the court ruling could significantly delay or even derail efforts to move ahead with an underground repository that will be vitally needed in coming decades.

Daily Times, 24 August 2004

US says diplomacy can resolve Iranian nuclear crisis

Vienna: The top US disarmament diplomat said on Monday evidence pointed to an Iranian nuclear weapons programme, but that Washington wanted a diplomatic solution and its ultimate goal was not to topple Tehran's government. "There's no question that US President Bush wants to resolve the Iranian issue diplomatically," US Under Secretary of State John Bolton told Reuters. "The evidence ... points to an Iranian nuclear weapons programme," Bolton said in a telephone interview. Iran denies wanting the bomb and says its nuclear programme is intended solely for the peaceful generation of electricity. The hawkish Bolton was responding to comments from several analysts at US think-tanks, who said that Washington was not interested in resolving the crisis with Iran. "They (US hard-liners) are not interested in resolving the crisis or changing regime behaviour, they want to change the regime,"

said Joseph Cirincione, head of non-proliferation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

Daily Times, 24 August 2004

Iran to build N-reactors with Russian help

Tehran: Brushing aside US accusations that it wants to build atomic weapons, Iran said Sunday it has contracted Russia to build more nuclear power plants, while claiming two European countries have also expressed interest in helping construct similar facilities. Russia is currently rebuilding Iran's first nuclear reactor, which was begun by West Germany but interrupted during the 1979 Islamic revolution. Damage caused to the facility in Bushehr, a coastal town in southern Iran, during the 1980-88 war with Iraq has also led to its inauguration being postponed from 2003 to August 2006. Despite the delays and the project's US\$800 million cost, Iranian nuclear officials say they want Russia to build more nuclear reactors to help generate greater amounts of electricity. "We have contracts with Russia to build more nuclear reactors. No number has been specified but definitely our contract with Russia is to build more than one nuclear power plant," Asadollah Sabouri, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran in charge of nuclear power plants, told reporters Sunday.

Daily Yomiuri, 24 August 2004

Expense not only factor in nuclear fuel issue

How can Japan use nuclear power as a major electricity source to maintain a stable supply of energy in the future? This question, like the problem of maintaining a secure food supply, is directly related to the nation's basic strategy and security. The government should look at what the situation might be like in 50 or 100 years, make comprehensive policy plans based on these projections and carry them out with resolve. A major pillar of Japan's nuclear policy is the Long Term Program for Research, Development and Utilization of Nuclear Energy, which has as its highest priority the realization of the

nuclear fuel cycle. In the nuclear fuel cycle, uranium and plutonium are extracted by reprocessing nuclear fuel spent at nuclear power stations, and using it again as fresh fuel for nuclear power generation. This cycle is said to have several advantages, including the promotion of efficiency in consuming uranium resources and in disposing of nuclear waste. However, the Atomic Energy Commission has started to review this cycle because, ahead of a review of the program done every five years, some experts have said that burying nuclear waste is more economical. They have demanded a change in the nation's nuclear policy toward more cost efficiency.

The Japan Times, 24 August 2004

Radioactive material found at university

About 1,100 bottles containing liquid radioactive material have been found unattended on the campus of the University of Tokushima, the education ministry said Monday, warning the university to improve its control of hazardous materials. The Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry issued a written reprimand to university President Toshihiro Aono. Radioactivity levels on the surfaces of the bottles were low, and there are no signs of contamination in the surrounding areas, the ministry said, adding that there is no danger to humans and the environment. The unattended bottles, most of them 20 milliliters in capacity, were found on shelves in laboratories, refrigerators along corridors and other research facilities. Most contained tritium, while some had radioactive materials from reagent chemicals. The ministry learned through inquiries of personnel at the university that some of the radioactive materials had been taken by professors out of controlled areas without permission and were used for experiments at laboratories between 1976 and 1997, ministry officials said. According to the university, the professors have explained that they took the materials because it was more convenient than bringing test tools into the controlled areas. University officials said they plan to punish the professors.

Daily Times, 25 August 2004

Clinton learnt of Pokhran test from CNN
(Khalid Hasan)

Washington: The Central Intelligence Agency's already tarnished reputation undergoes further disfigurement with the disclosure that President Bill Clinton learnt of the Indian nuclear test at Pokhran in 1998 not from the CIA but the Cable News Network (CNN). Strobe Talbot, who was deputy secretary of state under Clinton, writes in his just-released book – Engaging India: diplomacy, democracy and the bomb – that if New Delhi had conducted the nuclear test in order to force Washington to pay serious and sustained attention to India, the ploy worked. He discloses that just a month before Pokhran, Indian Foreign Secretary Krishnan Raghunath assured Washington that there would be no such surprises and India would exercise nuclear restraint. However, he adds, this could be because the official like the defence minister was “out of the loop” on this one. Contrary to American expectations, India shrugged off both international condemnation and sanctions that followed the test. The latter began to unravel in the next six months and increasingly France and other countries began to feel, to Washington's dismay, that not doing business with India was not a practical option. The 14 rounds of “strategic dialogue” held after Pokhran between Indian and the United States led to the transformation of the overall quality of relations between the two countries. They began to collaborate in areas that had in the past been considered taboo.

Daily Times, 25 August 2004

Iran says it is producing nuclear defence equipment

Tehran: Iran said it was producing nuclear defence equipment to protect its citizens in case of any possible attack on its nuclear facilities, local media reported on Tuesday. Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani said US sanctions have forced Iran to seek self-sufficiency in order to meet all its defense requirements, the government-owned

Persian daily Iran reported. "Iran has produced nuclear defense equipment," Iran quoted Shamkhani as saying. "If our nuclear power plants are targeted, there will be radioactive releases. You need special equipment to control it. Also, some countries in our neighborhood have achieved nuclear technology. We have to be prepared if there is an accident there," Shamkhani was quoted as saying. The minister did not elaborate on the type of equipment Iran was producing. Defense Ministry officials, reached by The Associated Press Tuesday, refused comment. India and Iran's western neighbor, Pakistan, are proved nuclear powers. Israel is also believed to possess hundreds of nuclear warheads. Shamkhani said U.S sanctions have benefited Iran, rather than harming it.

The Associated Press, 26 August 2004

N. Korea Nukes Won't Be Resolved Soon
Seoul: The dispute over communist North Korea's nuclear weapons programs is unlikely to be resolved before the U.S. presidential elections in November, South Korea's top nuclear negotiator said Thursday. Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuck made his remarks following a two-day visit to China, where he sought ways to reopen working group talks to prepare for the next round of six-nation nuclear talks. "I don't think the situation will enable the U.S. to reach an agreement one month before the U.S. elections, and North Korea is also likely to want to see the outcome of the elections," Lee said, according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency. The next round of talks -- which also involve China, Japan and Russia -- initially were set to take place by Sept. 30. But North Korea has recently thrown those plans into doubt by saying it will not attend working meetings to prepare for the larger talks. At the latest talks, North Korea offered to freeze its nuclear program in exchange for energy aid, the lifting of U.S. economic sanctions and removal from Washington's list of countries that sponsor terrorism. It said the freeze would be a step

toward eventual dismantling. The U.S. proposal required the North to disclose all its nuclear activities, helping to dismantle facilities and allow outside monitoring. Under the plan, some benefits would be withheld to ensure the North cooperates.

Daily Times, 27 August 2004

North Korean crisis needs new 'big-bang' approach (Martin Nesirky)

'Any attempt to go down the path of resolving this by coercion and confrontation is likely to make the problems experienced in Iraq look trivial by comparison'. Talks on North Korea's nuclear aims before November's US presidential elections are increasingly unlikely and a new "big bang" approach to entice Pyongyang is needed, an influential security group said on Thursday. Gareth Evans, a former Australian foreign minister who heads the International Crisis Group, told Reuters the other five countries involved in the negotiations over North Korea's nuclear weapons programmes needed to put more on the table. "The proposal put on the table by the US in June did show a bit more flexibility, which was very welcome as compared with previous very hard-line positions, but nonetheless it is manifestly not remotely enough to be attractive to the North Koreans," he said. "What has got to happen, I think, is a big bang total package has got to be put on the table which has a realistic chance of acceptance on the North Korean side and to test their bona fides by doing just that," said Evans, whose independent group is funded by foundations, governments and individual donations. He said the other players, China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States, had to offer "more for more"; more incentives such as economic and energy aid in return for guarantees on freezing and dismantling atomic projects.

The News, 27 August 2004

Russia denies Iran's N-plant facing delays
Moscow: Russia's top nuclear body rebuffed on Thursday Iran's announcement that an atomic reactor Moscow is building for the Islamic state, long an irritant in Russia-US

relations, faced further delays. Russia has been building the Bushehr plant in southern Iran since the early 1990s despite strong criticism from Washington, which says Tehran can use it to make a nuclear bomb. According to the latest start-up schedule seen by Reuters, Bushehr is due to come on stream next year and reach full capacity in 2006. But on Sunday, Asadollah Sabouri, Iran's senior nuclear official, said the plant would not start working until October 2006. "I don't know what that is all about. We have not been officially notified of any delays. In fact, there are no delays," said Nikolai Shingaryov, a spokesman for the Russian Atomic Energy Agency. "We intend to start it up in 2005. And we will do so." Washington says Iran seeks weapons of mass destruction and has called on Russia to ditch the \$800 million Bushehr project. It also fears Iran would use the 1,000-megawatt plant as a cover for the transfer of other sensitive nuclear technology. But Iran says it has no atomic weapons plans. Moscow also denies any suggestion that Tehran could make a bomb on the basis of the power station's technology.

The News, 28 August 2004

S Korea pushing for inter-Korean talks to resolve N-issue

Tokyo: South Korea hopes to break the impasse over North Korea's nuclear ambitions through a bilateral summit meeting, according to an interview with South Korean Prime Minister Lee Hai-Chan published in Japan on Friday. "We could find a clue to resolving the problem if a North-South summit is held," the Nihon Keizai Shimbun quoted Lee as saying in an interview with the economic paper in Seoul conducted on Thursday. He also said Seoul had already proposed holding such a meeting to Pyongyang, the paper said. The move reflected Seoul's strategy of deepening understanding at a summit and making the North take a softer stance, it said. If realised, the meeting would be the first inter-Korean summit since then South Korean president Kim Dae-Jung met North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il in June 2000 in Pyongyang.

Lee, who was in the South Korean delegation for the first summit, told the paper he had since been in contact with senior North Korean officials. Lee was also quoted as saying "there has been an indirect request for a visit (by the South Korean leader) to the North." "I think it is important to seek a clue to solving the North Korean nuclear issue," he told the paper, while adding the North Korean leader should come to South Korea this time round.

Terror Wire, 28 August 2004

Nuclear power: time for a rethink?

There is finally a consensus on the gravity of the threat we face from climate change, and most people agree that something urgently needs to be done to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. But given the depth of our dependence, that's no small task. And so in panic, a number of high-profile commentators are calling for the widespread adoption of nuclear power. Greens, they say, have to choose between climate change and their old enemy - nuclear power. But it's a manufactured choice, peddled by an industry in the final spasm of a struggle to survive. Fundamentally, nuclear power is a problem, not a solution. And it's a problem on virtually every level. Take the issue of security. About a week before the 11 September 2001 atrocity, the director of the French nuclear installation giant, Cogema, was asked about the risks of an airborne attack on a French power plant. He answered that there was no risk, because "it is forbidden to fly over it at low altitude." As far as I know, it's also illegal to fly planes into New York buildings.

Terror Wire, 29 August 2004

We'll prove nuclear program is peaceful, Iranian leader says (Vahid Salemi)

Iran: President Mohammad Khatami, in a rare news conference, said yesterday that Iran would not give up its right to have a nuclear program and that it was willing to guarantee it was seeking nuclear technology only for peaceful purposes. "We have suggested that the Middle East should be cleaned of all kinds of nuclear weapons," he

said. "On the other hand, we want to be able to master nuclear technology," he said, to enable Iran to manufacture uranium as fuel for its nuclear plants. "We want it and no one can deprive us of having it." In return, Khatami said that Iran was willing to "provide any guarantee," to prove that its nuclear program was for peaceful purposes. "We do not welcome tension," he said. "We do not welcome our case to be sent United Nations Security Council." "We will do our best to resolve our differences through negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the international community," he added, referring to the U.N. international monitoring agency for nuclear programs. Iran has allowed tougher inspections of its nuclear sites since October, but this is the first time the government has said publicly that it would provide a guarantee to ease international concerns. The United States has accused Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons and has urged the U.N. agency to send Iran's case to the Security Council, which could impose sanctions.

Terror Wire, 29 August 2004

Israel denies Pentagon spy claim (Julia Hortan)

Israel has denied as "outrageous" allegations that it planted a spy at the heart of the Pentagon to get information on Iran's nuclear programme. A top level analyst, said to be an aide to the third most senior defence official in the Pentagon, is suspected of passing top secret documents about US foreign policy to Israel. US government sources said the alleged spy works for the Pentagon's number three, Douglas Feith, the under-secretary of defence for policy. Feith is a key aide to defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, working on sensitive issues including US policy on Iraq and Iran. The FBI is said to have confirmed the allegation centres on an employee in Feith's office who passed secrets about Bush administration policy towards Iran to the main pro-Israeli lobbying group in Washington, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which then gave them to the Israeli

government. A presidential directive on US policy towards Iran, which was still in draft form, is said to have been handed over - raising fears that Israel could have used its unauthorised access to classified information to influence the US's position on foreign affairs, including the war on Iraq. US sources last night confirmed that the FBI is investigating an allegation of spying, although no arrests had been made yet.

Reuters, 29 August 2004

Powell, China's Li Discuss N.Korea Talks

Beijing: Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Secretary of State Colin Powell swapped views on the North Korean nuclear crisis at the weekend amid a diplomatic push to prepare for a new round of multi-party talks. China's Foreign Ministry did not say if they had agreed on dates for a fourth round of six-party discussions on the crisis during the Sunday telephone call, but South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported on Sunday the meeting was likely in September. At the end of the third round of talks in June, China, the United States, North and South Korea, Japan and Russia agreed to try to hold a new round before the end of September. Efforts to plan for that round have run into difficulties, and analysts say North Korea is unlikely to take part in serious negotiations until after the U.S. presidential election in November. Last week, North Korea blasted President Bush with slurs, raising questions among analysts about Pyongyang's willingness to attend a new round of talks or to take part in good faith. China, host of the six-way talks, has a major stake in seeing the process continue smoothly and renewed a diplomatic push to resolve the 22-month-old crisis at the weekend with top-level visits to both Koreas.

Dawn, 30 August 2004

Islamabad calls for strategic restraint

Islamabad, Aug 29: Pakistan said on Sunday that it was against an open-ended arms race in South Asia. Reacting to reports of a surface-to-surface missile test by India earlier in the day, Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan said a strategic restraint was

in the interest of both India and Pakistan. Mr Khan said India had given prior notification of the test to Pakistan's High Commissioner in New Delhi in accordance with an existing understanding. He said Pakistan had also conducted a series of tests to validate technical parameters of its missile systems in the recent past. The spokesman said Pakistan and India were committed to working towards strategic stability and the two countries would hold further talks on this subject in the near future.

Daily Times, 30 August 2004

Iran sees 'marginal' problems ahead with IAEA

Tehran: Iran has answered all "serious questions" about its nuclear activities but says some "marginal problems" could arise when the UN's atomic energy agency meets next month, a spokesman said on Sunday. "The serious questions have all been responded to and there is no more ambiguity," foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told reporters two weeks before the next International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meeting. Asefi said the next IAEA report due to be released in the coming days would also note "progress" in the work of inspectors currently probing the Islamic republic's nuclear activities. "We are virtually sure that the agency's report will not provide any pretext for the case to be referred to the Security Council" Asefi said. The United States, which accuses Iran of developing nuclear weapons under cover of generating atomic power, wants Tehran to be declared in breach of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and referred to the United Nations for possible sanctions. Iran says it is not interested in nuclear arms, and is only trying to meet future energy needs. Nevertheless, Asefi said, "prior experience has shown that before a meeting (of the IAEA), certain marginal problems can surface."

Dawn, 30 August 2004

China, US discuss Korean impasse

Beijing, Aug 29: China's foreign minister and US Secretary of State Colin Powell

discussed the North Korean nuclear row by telephone on Sunday amid mounting concerns over international moves to end the stand-off. Foreign minister Li Zhaoxing and Powell "exchanged views" on the long-running dispute, the official Xinhua news agency said without giving details. A Chinese delegation had travelled to North Korea on an unannounced visit on Saturday following repeated warnings from North Korea that it will pull out of the process. Working-level talks in Beijing ahead of the next round of six-nation negotiations - also involving Japan, Russia and South Korea - are yet to be scheduled. The stand-off began in October 2002 when the United States accused Pyongyang of operating a nuclear weapons programme based on enriched uranium, violating a 1994 agreement.

The Hindu, 30 August 2004

Agni-II test-fired

Bhubaneswar, Aug. 29: The country's indigenously developed Agni-II intermediate range ballistic missile was successfully test-fired from the Wheeler Island in Bay of Bengal off the Orissa coast today. The surface-to-surface missile was test-fired from a mobile launching pad at 12.55 p.m. The Defence Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, was present. The entire process of the test-firing was tracked down by telemetry and tracking stations and the naval ships stationed near the impact point at sea, according to sources. Agni-II is a two-stage solid propellant missile with a range of 2000 to 2500 km. It can carry conventional or nuclear warheads. Today's was the third test-firing of Agni-II. It was first test-fired on April 11, 1999, and then on January 17, 2001. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) started the Agni missile project in 1983 and the first test-firing was done on May 22, 1989. The Defence Secretary, Ajai Vikram Singh, the DRDO Secretary, V.K. Aatre, the Mission Director of Agni, R.N. Aggarwal, and a large number of defence scientists were present.

The Hindu, 30 August 2004

Pakistan not for arms race in South Asia
(B. Muralidhar Reddy)

Islamabad, Aug. 29: Pakistan has said it favours "strategic restraint" and is opposed to an 'open-ended' arms race in South Asia. In a cautious reaction to the test-firing of the 'Agni' missile by India, Pakistan Foreign Office said that it "does not favour an open-ended arms race in South Asia. We believe that a strategic restraint is in the interest of both nations." The Foreign Office spokesman, Masood Khan, said that under an agreement Pakistan had been informed in advance of the test-firing of the 'Agni' and that the two countries would hold talks on the subject soon. He said Pakistan also had conducted several missile tests. "We would hold further talks on this subject in the near future," he said in the context of the expert level talks between India and Pakistan on confidence building measures in the nuclear and conventional fields. Pakistan has been advocating a 'strategic restraint regime' covering nuclear and conventional fields. However, India does not see scope for such an agreement as, unlike Pakistan, Indian defence preparedness is not Pakistan-centric. Mr. Khan has said that Pakistan is not sheltering any fugitives wanted by India. He was reacting to the statement made by the External Affairs Minister, K. Natwar Singh, that India would raise the issue of extradition of 25 fugitives wanted by India and allegedly sheltered in Pakistan.

The News, 31 August 2004

Pakistan spent Rs 184 trillion on nuclear plan in 32 years (Rana Mubashir)

Islamabad: Pakistan has spent a recurring two percent of its national budget ever since the conception of its nuclear programme in 1972, a well-placed official source functioning under the Ministry of Defence revealed, brushing aside speculations about Pakistan spending huge amounts on its nuclear programme. According to the calculation, Pakistan has spent in total an amount of only Rs 184.295 trillion in the last 32 years. A statistical study reveals that India may have spent three times more than Pakistan on its defence and nuclear

enrichment programme. At present, India has between 50 and 100 nuclear devices. India is also capable of delivering its nuclear weapons against targets in Pakistan via French Mirages and Soviet SU-30 fighter-bombers or indigenous Agni-medium range missiles. India has worked on a longer range Agni plus, capable of striking major urban centres in eastern China. India is also developing a submarine-based delivery system in order to have the third leg of nuclear triad. India will eventually succeed in developing a submarine-based launch capability, former US diplomats serving in Pakistan and India have mentioned to the Bush administration. Barring some sort of South Asia arms agreement, India will certainly continue expanding its nuclear weapons capabilities, this is similarly true with regard to missile delivery systems. Thus, in the absence of any result oriented discussions between Pakistan-India that too in a limited time span and confidence-building measures, the threat of any major conflict going nuclear remains real but on part of Pakistan it will be the last resort and only if it is a do or die situation for Pakistan.

Daily Times, 31 August 2004

Dr Qadeer-linked nuclear market: IAEA seeks Libya's help

Vienna: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) praised Libya on Monday for cooperation in reporting on its dismantled nuclear programme but said "critical questions" remained as to whether Tripoli had given copies of nuclear weapons designs to other countries. The UN agency said Libya and "other member states" of the IAEA would have to cooperate in investigating the Pakistani-run black market that supplied these designs, in a report released on Monday and obtained by AFP. IAEA spokesman Mark Gwozdecky said: "We've had excellent cooperation" since Libya agreed in December to dismantle its programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction. But he added "to have a full picture of what happened is going to involve ongoing work, particularly with the black market." Gwozdecky said "critical

questions" remained about whether Libya had made copies of the nuclear weapons designs it had obtained through the black market run by disgraced Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan. "We want to know if copies were made," he said. The investigation would focus on "getting information from the source of these (arms design) drawings," which is the black market, he said. In May, the IAEA said it would continue to investigate Libya's abandoned nuclear program as much to discover new facts about Libya as about the international smuggling network that supplied it.

Dawn, 31 August 2004

Probe into Libya's N-plan not over

Vienna, Aug 30: Libya appears to be earnest in its efforts to reveal the extent of its atomic bomb programme, the UN nuclear watchdog said in a report published on Monday. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said one major caveat to the confidential report's conclusion is the need to verify that Libya has not passed on the design for a nuclear warhead that it acquired on the black market. "The agency's assessment to date is that Libya's declarations on its uranium conversion programme, enrichment programme and other past nuclear-related activities appear to be consistent with information available to and verified by the agency," the IAEA said in the report. The report also praised Libya for its "good cooperation with the agency since the beginning of verification activities in Libya following Libya's declaration in Dec 2003". Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's surprise decision to abandon banned weapons was one of the major steps in the recent reintegration of the once-isolated North African state into the international community. This came shortly after Qadhafi agreed to pay damages for the Lockerbie, Scotland. Although its investigation is proceeding well, the IAEA said there were still some questions to be answered for it to reach a definitive conclusion on Tripoli's covert quest for the bomb.

The News, 31 August 2004

North Korea accuses US of 'darkening prospects' for N-talks

South Korea: North Korea warned on Monday that Washington's "hostile policy" toward the communist country was "darkening prospects" for negotiations on its nuclear program. The next round of six-nation talks seeking to convince North Korea to give up its nuclear ambitions was initially scheduled to take place by the end of September. But the talks have been thrown into doubt after the North said earlier this month it wouldn't attend preparatory meetings. "The U.S. unfair hostile policy toward the DPRK is the main obstacle in resolving the nuclear issue and securing peace and stability in the region," the North's state-run Rodong Sinmun newspaper said in a commentary. DPRK stands for Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name. The newspaper also said U.S. policy was "darkening prospects for the fourth round of six-party talks," according to the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency, monitored by South Korea's Yonhap news agency. North Korea has recently levelled strong rhetoric against U.S. President George W. Bush, calling him an "imbecile" and comparing him to Adolf Hitler. South Korean officials and analysts believe Pyongyang is seeking to put off the talks until after the November U.S. presidential elections, hoping it will have an easier time negotiating if Democratic challenger John Kerry unseats Bush. Still, efforts are under way to open the next round of nuclear talks, which also involve China, Japan, Russia and South Korea.